New Ireland

Art of the South Pacific

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New Ireland

Art of the South Pacific

edited by
Michael Gunn & Philippe Peltier

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Foreword

We are very pleased to present *New Ireland: Art of the South Pacific*, the result of a collaboration between the Saint Louis Art Museum and the musée du quai Branly, with the much appreciated support of the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin.

Despite the incredible artistry and skill evident in the prolific output of New Ireland artists of the late 19th century, their work is still largely unknown. This exhibition and catalogue intend to rectify that. The works of art selected for this exhibition are of such a quality that the design and craftsmanship would be undeniable in any context. However, the narrow range of time and place are especially important to our understanding of them. There is less than a hundred years between the oldest and newest works on view, yet they represent an artistic tradition that is at least four hundred years old. They originated from the people living on a relatively unknown island group barely 450 kilometers long, but home to one of the most sophisticated sculptural traditions in the Pacific region. The story of how these arts flourished before, and even during, the period when contact with the outside world was resulting in a major dislocation of traditional cultural practices, is the subject of this exhibition and book.

Because the story to be told includes many dualities—the better-known northern tradition vs. the more mysterious southern tradition; the differing dynamics of restricted vs. open art traditions; the contrast of male and female energies—it is fitting that our recognitions of the origins of this exhibition are also paired. Michael Gunn, associate curator of Oceanic Art at the Saint Louis Art Museum, and Philippe Peltier, curator of African and Oceanic Art at the musée du quai Branly in Paris, have pursued this project and furthered the understanding of art from New Ireland with energetic scholarship and cultural respect. It is our great pleasure to have supported their research and to host the exhibition that realizes their work. However, no amount of scholarly interest or curatorial tenacity could have brought about this exhibition were it not for the great knowledge and cooperative spirit of many individual New Irelanders, who have been willing to share both information and insight. We are profoundly grateful for their generosity.

The broad scope of this exhibition was supported by the partnership between our two museums. From the earliest discussions we have benefited from the collaboration

and commitment of the Saint Louis Art Museum, which will open the exhibition in October 2006, and the musée du quai Branly, which will feature it in 2007. Together we welcomed a third museum, the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin, now scheduled to present the exhibition to its visitors in late 2007.

We thank the lenders to this exhibition. Their willingness to share these wonderful sculptures and their kind consideration of an extended tour have ensured the possibility that many more visitors will enjoy seeing some of the greatest examples of art from New Ireland.

An enterprise this large succeeds only with the contributions of many farsighted, capable, and dedicated people. While we must leave most of those names to the acknowledgments that precede, we particularly recognize Michael Gunn, associate curator; Andrew Walker, assistant director for curatorial affairs; Linda Thomas, assistant director for exhibitions; and Jeanette Fausz, registrar, from the Saint Louis Art Museum. From the musée du quai Branly we acknowledge the efforts of Philippe Peltier, curator; Germain Viatte, Directeur du projet muséologique; Hélène Cerutti, Responsable de la production; Delphine Davenier, Responsable des expositions; and Muriel Rausch, Clair Morizet, and Juliette Solvès for their efforts on the publication. We owe a debt of gratitude to Markus Schindlbeck of the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin. *New Ireland: Art of the South Pacific* has been made possible by generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts, federal agencies.

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Preface

Philippe Peltier & Michael Gunn

pl. I
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
L.1482/229
Chest ornament made from pig's tusks with shell eyes; probably worn by an important man when conducting a ritual or ceremonial sequence.
Northern New Ireland, east coast Madak region, Lambusso village [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Governor Dr. Albert Hahl, probably before 1910.
Pig tusks, seedcase, cowrie shell, shell (*Turbo petholatus*), string, glass beads.
H: 11; W: 14.5; D: 1.8 cm.

In the early days of April 1643, during a major voyage of exploration, Commander Abel Janszoon Tasman of the Dutch East India Company came across a shark-hunting canoe near an island, which he promptly named Fishers Island. What he saw surprised him. Fortunately, Isaac Gilsemans, Tasman's merchant on board, was an accomplished artist and made a drawing of the scene. Gilsemans carefully noted the hairstyles of the three men, the canoe's prow and figureheads, the impressively carved paddles, and the shark catchers positioned across the width of the canoe. His rendering, which has been reproduced many times as an engraving, is undoubtedly one of the earliest images to feature the main art tradition or the people from northern New Ireland.

A lesser-known drawing was made by Jules de Blosseville during a round-the-world voyage between 1822 and 1825. When he visited the village of Likiliki in southern New Ireland, Blosseville was captivated by a startling character first seen dashing forward on the shore while dancing. The man's incredible costume consisted of an enormous belt of shell money, nine feet in circumference, that was held at his chest, but fell in the middle and extended to his thighs. Above the belt rose a quadrangular pyramid whose rear was covered with leaves and whose front was a black grid decorated with white markings. The man's head was hidden under this mask, but one of his arms emerged from the leaves and was holding a spear. Blosseville's drawing is the first known document to represent a mask from southern New Ireland.

In spite of those early travelers' fascination with the strangeness of these masks and many visits to Carteret Harbor on the southern tip of New Ireland since then, almost nothing is known of the other art traditions of that area. All attention and interest were completely focused on the societies living in the northern part of the island. Meanwhile, the customs of the people living in southern New Ireland returned to the shadows and were forgotten.

Geography and culture are two reasons for the disparity in our knowledge about the different cultural traditions on the island. The geographical explanation has to do with where the populations were located and how densely they occupied their relative areas. In the south, for example, the people were generally much more difficult to contact because many of them lived inland in the mountains; in the north, which was more heavily populated, people were usually found near the coast. The cultural reasons for the discrepancy of information and understanding are more complicated. In the north, art objects—or more precisely, *malagan* art-works made for different funeral rituals—were produced from intellectual property owned by clans and clan leaders: the actual making of the object and the right to make it were important aspects of intellectual property. The object itself was understood as a manifestation of those property rights, so it could be detached from its intellectual source and sold. As a consequence, many of the art-works created for specific ceremonies were sold to foreigners after having been used in ritual context. In a very different situation, however, the cultural life of the south was dominated by the *tubuan* secret society. Most of the art objects associated with that secret society were subject to such strict controls that even today there are no *tubuan* masks from southern New Ireland in Western museums.

An astonishing number of northern-produced objects began to appear in European and Australian collections between 1880 and 1914. Though the exact causes of this effervescence remain uncertain, a major reason for the disproportionate representation of art-works from different parts of New Ireland has to do with Western sensibilities and the taste for *malagan* objects from the north. Moreover, sculpture from northern New Ireland fell under a wide-ranging European debate on exotic objects. The painted sculptural qualities of *malagan* objects intrigued Westerners, and there was a fascination with the way the sculpture was made, in that it exhibited a complexity not found in any other so-called "primitive art." Sculpturally, art from northern New Ireland was characterized by very fine, three-dimensional, interlacing images that to a Western eye may appear to be one image blending into another. The finely painted surface of the carved wood added a further layer of visual ambiguity. Artistic skills were clearly obvious.

At the end of the 19th and in the early years of the 20th centuries interest in collecting and exhibiting such works was concentrated primarily in ethnographic museums—especially in Germany, Australia, and, to some extent, France. But many artists, notably participants of the pictorial avant-garde, were fascinated by *malagan* sculptures. Before the First World War the most impassioned were the German Expressionists (the painter Emil Nolde participated as a draughtsman in a medical expedition), and after the war, the French Surrealists. The enthusiasm given to "expressionist" art and later to the "surrealist arts of the South Pacific" led to a shift in attitude. Museums and other cultural institutions became more interested in the artistic potential of art-works from New Ireland.

The museum storerooms we visited, particularly those in Germany, revealed an unsuspected richness and variety among the art objects from New Ireland. However, we also came upon a significant number of pieces that could not be easily related to existing knowledge. We found such explorations very rewarding, for it shows that the art of New Ireland cannot be reduced simply to that of the *malagan* tradition. In fact, it demonstrated to us that the "ancient times" were built around a much more complex series of art traditions than exist today.

We tried to identify, or at least delineate, some of these various forms of otherwise unknown "art traditions." For some groups of art-works from New Ireland we were able to distinguish specific stylistic markers that made it possible to link undocumented objects to documented ones and to attribute pieces to a relatively precise geographical location. But to go further—to attempt to re-create a social and even historical context—would be to step beyond the boundaries of verifiable reality and reinvent the past. Early collections often were formed with the idea that the objects themselves could be sources of information about the peoples and cultures that produced them. Unfortunately, many of these objects were collected without contextual information.

Western intellectual traditions exposed this lack of documentation and made clear that an art object on its own was alienated and of little value for understanding the people who had produced it. One of the aims of this exhibition has been to provide more context for the art-works based on fieldwork that we and others conducted in New Ireland in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. For this reason we invited several ethnographers to contribute essays related to the areas where they undertook their research. Furthermore, to examine the link between objects made in the 19th century and the people living in New Ireland today, we showed hundreds of photographs of objects collected in the 19th century to authoritative people living traditional lives in remote villages throughout New Ireland. This documentation, together with ethnographic data recorded by German ethnologists in the early 20th century, provides the basis for our current understanding.

Our study of art-works from New Ireland in Western collections and our examination of museum records revealed that there was a considerable increase in their acquisition in the decades after 1880, which then tapered off drastically after 1914. Few museums have objects older than 1880 (although a number of pieces are shown here). There are several explanations for this phenomenon. The primary period of increasing Western presence in New Ireland occurred between 1880 and 1914, and included the imposition of the German colonial system from 1884 to 1914. During those years, significant social changes occurred throughout much of this previously insular region. In the pre-colonial period the only avenue to high social status in New Ireland was directly related to the production and use of art-works in ritual context—either to honor the dead in the north, or as part of social influence and

control in the south. After Western influence became so pervasive, other avenues to high status opened up: access to Western influence and goods, conversion to Christianity, and the consequent social power that came with membership in religious organizations of the colonial powers. Equally shattering to the existing cultural system was the disruptive impact of the plantation labor system in which large numbers of young men were taken out of the islands and sent to work in Queensland, many never to return.

A wide range of art was produced in the early colonial period but over time the range diminished markedly. Some art styles became extinct shortly after German administration was imposed; others did not die out until the 1930s. Some traditions, such as the one associated with the so-called *kulap* stone figures from the region south of Namatanai, appear to have evolved into a tourist trade for a short time before dying out. Others vanished quite abruptly. The range of art traditions still active in the 21st century is even more limited in scope. When you look at *tatanua* masks, for example, those that were collected in the 1920s appear to be quite stereotyped. But in older museum collections there is an immense range of subtypes of this mask. The strongly prognathic mouth must have been used in the far north and on New Hanover, but its use appears to be extinct now. On the other hand, the tradition of the square-mouthed sub-type seen in masks farther south, specifically in the Nalik and Notsi regions, is still alive. These examples suggest that there was a wide range of sub-types and traditions that disappeared under the onslaught of Western culture and administration. The example of the masks calls into question the increasingly narrow stylistic systems used by museums to categorize them. There exist, as often is true in Melanesia, forms that largely overflow a small area. Masks related to dances, that for want of a better word can be called "theatrical," are present in almost all of New Ireland. Often closely related to each other in structure or in form, their apparent similarity makes formal classification difficult. Our work taught us to modulate our approach and brought us to the understanding of a clear distinction between art styles and the traditions that have used these art objects.

We hope the findings presented in the exhibition and accompanying catalogue will open avenues for further research. Our fieldwork indicates that even though the actual objects may not have been produced for decades, the knowledge regarding them is still with the people of New Ireland. However, this knowledge is not a coherent whole, and there is no such thing as an objective reality regarding New Ireland cultural traditions at the level Westerners tend to seek. Instead, the information is owned by individuals and by clans, and survives as fragments in the minds of thousands of people.

New Irelanders have shown us that art traditions are much more complicated than the simple production of art objects. On a very broad level, we can understand cultural systems that integrate much of the northern region in the case of *malagan*;

secret societies provide a venue for political interaction in the south. Both systems utilize art objects as part of their internal interaction. But New Irelanders identify at least 22 sub-regions at the level of language groups—where most of the inter-village cultural activity takes place. Much research still needs to be done in order for us to begin to comprehend more clearly the diversity of the complex network of societies and ceremonies in New Ireland.

Our thanks extend to many people, whom we have the pleasure of naming in the Acknowledgments that follow. However, we wish to note that our work could not have been done without those hundreds of people in New Ireland who tried to help us understand the world the way they understand it. To them goes our first gratitude.

Presentation & Overview

pl. 109 (detail, see p. 253)

New Ireland in Melanesia

Philippe Peltier

On 11 September 1767, Philip Carteret wrote in his shipboard journal: "*and to the northern island I gave the name of Nova Hibernia or New Ireland.*"[1] Some hundred and fifty years after it was first discovered by the Dutch mariner Jacob Le Maire, the island was given this strange name which it has kept ever since, except during the period of German colonization when it was known as "Neu-Mecklenburg." It was not until several decades after its initial discovery that another explorer, French this time, incorporated it in a broader group under the name of Melanesia. By gathering in a vast geographical region, the scattered island groups forming an arc off the east coast of Australia, Dumont D'Urville implied that these islands shared a number of common characteristics – not only geographical (densely forested mountainous islands) but also human (*melos* being the Greek word for "black"). The validity of this geographical subset has been widely debated. Despite much criticism—the main objection being that Melanesia's cultural traits do not always distinguish it sharply from the other regions of the Pacific—the name has stuck. And it is generally recognized that these islands have common characteristics which are astonishingly varied and transformative.

An island in the Melanesian arc

The island of New Ireland lies to the east of New Guinea. Together with New Britain and a scattering of other smaller islands, it forms a geographical unit named the Bismarck Archipelago. This name reflects that the destiny of the region was for a time linked to that of colonial Germany—until 1914—before becoming a League of Nations protectorate under Australian mandate.

The island stretches in a long narrow strip about 470 km by 10 km at its most narrow. Its backbone is a mountain chain culminating in a peak of 2,399 meters in the southern part. In the south, the mountains fall sheer into the sea. In the north,

1. Wallace 1965: 88-89.

they generally give way to narrow coastal plains along which the Germans established large copra plantations in the late 19th century. These days the villages are located along the coast, but it is quite likely that before the displacements caused by the German colonial administration a large proportion of the population lived on the plateau or in deep valleys, with limited relations between different groups of people. A string of islands lies off the northeast coast, always within sight of land. The largest are New Hanover, Tabar, Lihir, Tanga, Anir, and Nissan—the latter is itself halfway to the island of Buka in the northern Solomon Islands. On the opposite coast, the Duke of York Islands are very close to the large island of New Britain. All these islands are inhabited and, as is always the case in Melanesia, they have developed their own social patterns.

Little is known about the origin of these peoples. For obscure reasons, small groups began to migrate from Southeast Asia and settled on the coasts, gradually spreading to all the island groups in the Melanesian arc. These migrations were slow and probably sporadic. They started before 33,000 years ago and underwent major changes about 3,500 years ago. This is not the place to review the region's long and complex prehistory. Suffice it to say that two language families coexist in the Bismarck Archipelago: Papuan languages and the more recently introduced Austronesian languages. Eighteen languages are currently spoken in New Ireland, but only one is classed as Papuan. Apart from its language, no specific trait now distinguishes this group from its neighbors and it is part of the large cultural complex in the north. Languages are never a barrier to culture. Speaking a language structurally different from neighboring languages is no hindrance to the sharing of common cultural traits or forms.

No more than language, the sea has never been an obstacle to communication between the islands. Melanesians can be excellent navigators, although of course this does not shield them from accidents or drifting off course during a storm. People, food supplies, ideas and objects circulate freely. The circulation of goods and people is a primary feature of Melanesian cultures. In this context, attempting to define cultural groups on the basis of a number of traits or signs believed to be proper to them and assigning them a specific geographical area, is highly problematical. Melanesian societies are trading societies. A cult, a dance step, a mask, or a piece of finery can be bought and sold. The secret society distinguished by its *tubuan* and *dukduk* masks exists in the south of New Ireland as well as in the north of New Britain. The people of New Ireland say that they sold the rituals associated with these masks to the Tolai people of New Britain.[2] Another well-known example is provided by the *malagan* objects and motifs which were exported from the Tabar Islands to the northern region of the large island. Trading patterns are so complex that it is sometimes difficult to attribute a specific origin to a given ritual or object. Arguably, the most appropriate metaphor for the cultures of this region is a rhizome pattern, that is, complex ramifications in which ritual forms can reappear sometimes at great distances and after a long period of time. The arrival of the Europeans, the establishment of the German colony, then the Australian protectorate disturbed organization and relationships within these societies, even if their cultural practices have sometimes proved very tenacious.

2. *Tubuan* and *dukduk* masks belong to a secret society. One of the earliest observers of societies in this region, Richard Parkinson, believed that the *dukduk* had been introduced to the Duke of York Islands in the 1820–1830s and from there, in 1840–1850, spread to the Gazelle Peninsula (see Parkinson [1907] 1999: 252). He suggests that these masks could have originated in the north of the Solomon Islands.

Map 1
New Ireland: islands and villages.

Population and culture

Nowadays, the great majority of the population lives in coastal villages, usually located near a gap in the coral reef. These villages are made up of a series of small hamlets, each of which is primarily occupied by the members of one clan and their spouses. We know nothing about the organization of the mountain villages of the past. Like all Melanesians, the people of New Ireland are gardeners. The gardens supply their staple food which is supplemented by hunting and fishing. Apart from pigs, which were imported from Southeast Asia long ago, the islands have no large mammals, the main sources of daily protein are fish and chickens. Pigs are carefully tended and cared for. They are consumed during an important part of every ceremony and are raised in semi-liberty for that purpose. The most fertile regions are the most heavily populated, and in these areas relatively short working hours can produce a sometimes considerable

food surplus. In New Ireland, taro and coconuts are the main crops. These two plants have a fundamental symbolic place in trade and rituals. On the Tabar Islands, a coconut is the first thing acquired by a boy during certain *malagan* ceremonies, and its shape is the symbolic base for other forms. In some regions the taro is considered to have a female attribute and many dances evoke not only its cultivation but also its power to multiply itself from a single tuber.

In Melanesia, political power is neither centralized nor inherited. Such societies are often called acephalous societies. That does not mean that there are no powerful men. Any man in the group can establish his authority by accumulating goods and knowledge. This complex process requires the acquisition and memorization of often secret knowledge, the organization of major ceremonies and mastery of the flow of goods, often distributed in large quantities. The few men capable of controlling this trade enjoy an immense, although fragile, prestige. Although *malagan* ceremonies in New Ireland are initially intended to honor a dead person, they are also the scene of power struggles and of the sharing out of rights which enable one man to control access to the resources and the circulation of valuables. But in practice things are more complex. The societies are matrilineal, which means that the lineage is inherited through the mother's line (the head of the clan being a person's maternal uncle). A very complex system of transfer of rights between the mother's side and the father's side and precise rules governing marriage and alliances between clans mean that a lost *malagan* ceremonial cycle can be recovered in the next generation.

Melanesian art

Some writers have called parts of Melanesia "huge workshops." Indeed, their output is impressive and they number many artists. A Melanesian artist is not necessarily an image-maker as we understand it in the West. Although improvisation and innovation are permitted—often interpreted as the manifestation of ancestral powers—they must stay within the rules. An artist's main task is to outline the shapes in accordance with the canons for the figures and the iconographic rules, and to coordinate all the elements. The best artist of each region is well known and people recognize his work even if he uses apprentices and other assistants to help during the busy times associated with major ceremonies.

Even if they are based on natural forms, the images are never strict "representations" of reality. We are far removed from imitation as it has developed in the West: an anthropomorphic figure is very seldom the representation of an ancestor or a god. Signs or images link human society to a world created by ancestors who have long since withdrawn from this world. These ancestral powers appear in the environment from time to time in the most unexpected forms; reflections, light rays, or animal behavior. It is these manifestations, which are considered to be signs of the ancestors' power, that the objects translate and try to capture. Once translated into images, the signs still have to be able to act. This is the work of the rituals which play on the effects of appearance and disappearance in order to reveal a presence. All the resources of the theater are brought into play: splendid effects, sudden apparitions, often for a very brief moment and sometimes in semidarkness, strange often disturbing forms, sumptuous

costumes and finery, glowing colors and shapes, strange sounds such as that produced by bull-roarers kept carefully out of sight of the audience. The anthropomorphic figures, usually animated as masks, never appear alone. They are always in the center of a complex structure or an ephemeral construction. Visual effects are accentuated by the use of elements which stir at the least movement or puff of wind. The visual effects produced by each element are just as important as the overall effect of the ceremony. The most characteristic feature of Melanesian art is probably the array of natural objects used: feathers, leaves, shells, ferns, lichen, seaweed, and so on. The result is a clever mixture of visual effects, which runs the entire gamut from smooth to rough, glossy to dull, stable to moving. *Malagan* sculptors use cat's eyes from a shell *Turbo petholatus.* When attached to an object they give it a fixed, disquieting stare and bring a sculpture to life. They give it a power which is a further sign of a presence, a presence which, faced with the disturbing strangeness of Melanesian objects, we sometimes feel for a moment.

New Ireland art-producing traditions

Michael Gunn

New Ireland has a long and richly developed tradition of performances for which people make and use a wide variety of art objects. These range from long ritual canoes that honor people who have died, to masks used to remove taboos from villages and graveyards, to headdresses worn in group dances. In the 19th century immense prestige was attached to artistic creativity in New Ireland, and many teams of artists were employed to produce superb art-works for a singular and spectacular performance. Most of these works of art were used just the one time and were then burnt, smashed, or sold to Western art collectors.

During the later phases of this incredibly prolific period of creative activity, more than 20,000 objects of art from New Ireland were brought to Western countries and are now found in museums and private collections. Most were collected without any form of documentation, and it is apparent that many of the cultural traditions that were the generating force behind the production of art objects no longer exist. As part of an attempt to try to understand the nature of the various manifestations of this creative force we traveled to New Ireland to speak with the people living there.[1] We traveled as widely as we were able, taking canoes and other small boats to the offshore islands of Tabar, Lihir, and Anir. We visited people living in villages all over mainland New Ireland, and stayed in their men's houses. We met people who had an active knowledge of the cultural traditions of their part of the world, and we sat down with them and brought out photographs of hundreds of art objects that had been collected in New Ireland.

We attended many performances in which art objects such as masks, headdresses, and figural sculpture were used. Sometimes these performances were traditional ritual activities with a history that goes back for hundreds of years; men dancing in masks to songs sung in a language that nobody understands any longer. Sometimes the dances were new creations and the people sang about submarines.

We tried to write down what the people told us, in the way they told us, without distortion. This was not easy, for we had been trained in the theory of art and had practiced the art of theory—in the Western manner. But New Irelanders cared little for theory, they wanted us to document reality, their reality—which included sorcery and a whole world of interaction with sharks and birds about which we knew nothing and had a hard time understanding.

One thing we did understand quite clearly was that the creation and use of art objects in New Ireland is very different from the creation and use of art objects in the West. New Ireland is a region where written language did not develop, but art objects were created for use in a wide variety of situations where legal authority was needed.

We found that cultural traditions, as well as the art objects that were produced for these traditions, varied on every level. Considered very broadly, the people living in northern New Ireland share a similar culture, which is different from that found in central and southern New Ireland. When we looked more closely at northern New Ireland, we found that the *malagan* system practiced in the Kara region on the mainland is distinctly different from that practiced on Tabar—although the various *malagan*

1. Antje Denner worked on Anir 2000, 2001–2002, 2004; Brigitte Derlon on the Lelet Plateau 1983–1984, 1993; Michael Gunn on Tabar 1982, 1983–1984; Sean Kingston in the Lak (Siar) region 1994–1996; Susanne Küchler in the Kara region 1982–1984; Graeme Were in the Nalik region in 2000–2001. As part of research directly related to this exhibition Michael Gunn, Philippe Peltier, and Vicky Barnecutt traveled to 13 regions of New Ireland in 2001. In 2003 Michael Gunn traveled with Presley Johnah to 9 regions of New Ireland.

Map 2
New Ireland: regions.

practices are compatible with each other. Ritual practice varies even at the village level, depending upon which *malagan* is used and who owns it. New Irelanders were consistent in explaining to us that the ritual practices from one area or region are not the same as those from another place. Ritual process is localized in New Ireland.

New Irelanders also made it very clear that art-producing traditions are of two types: they are either subject to copyright or they are freely available. Art-producing traditions that are subject to copyright are owned by sub-clans or by individuals, and the copyright cannot be sold freely on an open market. For example, the *malagan* cultural traditions of northern New Ireland are used to honor the dead through the creation and display of art objects. Outsiders cannot buy their way into this system, and the rights to create and use these art objects are acquired formally and in ritual context. These art-producing traditions are quite stable and can be regionally defined by geography, for the ownership and use of significant resources such as land are primary concerns underlying much of the ritual communication in New Ireland.

By contrast, people can buy into freely available art-producing traditions that are much more mobile. These tend to be dances or other public performances that use masks or headdresses. Some have their origins in New Ireland, others are imports from nearby New Britain or other locations within Papua New Guinea. As these performances are taken up in different places, they are expressed through the art styles of particular regions.

Our research indicated that very few art objects were created outside of the main art-producing traditions. In other words, almost all art objects were created within an art-producing tradition linked to a cultural tradition that enabled the art object to be used as a symbolic object.

A brief outline (from north to south) of some of the sculptural traditions that have existed in New Ireland within that past 150 years now follows. Data was gathered from the historical record, objects in museum collections, and the current situation in the 22 culturally distinct regions of New Ireland. These are only a sample of the known art traditions, and some of these have flowered into a huge range of variation.

1. Northern art tradition. Masks, sculpture, and many other objects were created within this art tradition to be used in *malagan, kipang, bual, tatanua,* and a number of other lesser-known or regional cultural traditions. This is the dominant art tradition of New Ireland, and it has a number of distinctive sub-traditions or styles that are generally directly linked to a cultural sub-tradition. For example, the sub-tradition of the cultural tradition of *malagan* known as *Malagatsak* on Tabar frequently uses a particular art style for the headdress element of its painted wooden sculpture (see fig. 1).

2. *Vavara* art tradition. One of the minor art traditions used in *malagan* cultural traditions on the Tabar Islands and the northern regions of the mainland from Tigak to Madak, including the Lelet Plateau. *Vavara*'s woven disc-like objects were usually destroyed after their use in ritual context and are rare in museum collections.

3. Painted fiber panels used in women's taboo houses. Known from only one house in the east coast Nalik region.

4. *Uli* art tradition. Very distinctively carved figures were used by people living in the interior of the island just northwest of the Lelet Plateau, inland of present-day Konos, in the now extinct cultural tradition known today as *uli*.

5. White-faced helmet masks were most likely created in the same villages where *uli* figures and overmodeled skulls were used—the inland region northwest of the Lelet Plateau. These masks may have been used in *kipang* traditions.

6. Overmodeled or painted human skulls were used in many places throughout New Ireland. There seems to be some regional variation of the overmodeled skulls in terms of the art style.

Fig. 1.
Daniel Lupindi with *malagan* figure *tilimadas si mi Malagacak* (now in Northern Territory Museum, Darwin. NGE 912). Sinikima village, Big Tabar Island, 1982.
Photo taken by Michael Gunn. Courtesy Northern Territory Museum, Darwin.

7. Bark-cloth masks generally known as *biok* were made and used on the Lihir Islands as part of the breadfruit harvest festivals.

8. *Vovo* stone figures were used during *kabai* ceremonies in the Barok region.

9. Bark-cloth was painted in the northern art style and used during marriage exchanges in the region around the narrow isthmus of central New Ireland.

10. Three-dimensional art objects, including carved and painted figures of various styles, as well as overmodeled skulls, were used in the narrow isthmus of central New Ireland.

11. Naturalistic wooden figures were used in men's houses in the narrow isthmus region.

12. Bark-cloth masks were used by the people living inland in the southern part of the narrow isthmus of central New Ireland. These were used in a cultural tradition that may have been related to some of those used on the Lihir Islands.

13. Stone figures, generally known as *kulap*, were created in the mountainous area of the Punam region, south of the narrow isthmus.

14. Stylistically related bark-cloth masks were used on Tanga, Anir, and in the Fanamaket region on the east coast of southern New Ireland.

15. A more loosely defined group of bark-cloth masks have been found on the east coast of southern New Ireland and on the offshore islands to the east. These seem to be a number of variants in a dispersed tradition of making bark-cloth masks.

16. Wooden figures painted red, white, and blue are known from the east coast of southern New Ireland, Tanga and the Anir Islands.

17. Body masks with a conical head were used throughout much of southern New Ireland in the *tubuan* secret society.

18. Spectacular headdresses made of cane, bark-cloth, and fiber; painted red and white.

The history of collecting in New Ireland

◂ I.3

Vicky Barnecutt

The first recorded contact between Europeans and the people of New Ireland occurred in 1616 when the Dutch expedition led by Schouten and Le Maire spent ten days sailing past the island. 150 years of sporadic contact with Europeans followed, with other explorers such as Tasman, Dampier and Carteret spending time in the area. These expeditions were very keen to trade for fresh food and water, but the crews were usually hesitant to go ashore. This meant that New Irelanders remained in control of contact, going out in canoes to trade with the ships. Carteret broke this pattern during his visit in 1767. His crew were wracked with scurvy and he sent men ashore at the southern end of New Ireland to plunder thousands of coconuts, destroying hundreds of palms in the process. He managed to trade successfully off the west coast of New Ireland and Carteret noted that the New Irelanders "seemed to be fond of all Kinds of iron… Beads, Ribbens, looking glasses, pieces of Cloth linens and Showy things."[1]

Carteret's visit was the start of a period of more sustained contact between Europeans and New Irelanders. Bougainville's expedition spent time on the south coast just a few months after Carteret, and D'Entrecasteaux visited in 1792. Long-distance traders and government shipping supplying the British colony at Port Jackson in Australia soon joined the explorers in these waters. Smaller ships trading between Asia and Australia needed to stay close to land and obtain supplies regularly, so favored routes that took them past the Bismarck Archipelago. Whalers first visited in 1799, and the region quickly became popular as whaling ships were able to procure the supplies of wood, water, and food vital for their long voyages.

The earliest record of trading for ethnographic artifacts comes from 1803, when the wife of the captain of an English ship traveling between Australia and Bengal recorded purchasing a number of "curiositys."[2] She acquired the artifacts, including a spear with a human bone handle and human teeth decoration, from men from Tanga who came to the ship in a canoe. Trade in artifacts must have started soon after the trade in food, wood and water, probably before the end of the 18th century. The earliest trade in artifacts is not reflected in museum collections as the only object to survive from before 1850 is a spear in Salem's Peabody Essex Museum that was donated between 1821 and 1831 by the son of a renowned local trader.[3] New Ireland men would have carried spears in their canoes as a matter of course, so their collection is not as remarkable as that of larger ritual objects like wooden carvings.

The earliest certain date of collection for a New Ireland ritual object is from a wooden mask[4] that appears to have been carved with metal tools, donated to the Chichester Museum in southern England by the mysterious, but much appreciated, Miss Newman of Midhurst in 1859. Unfortunately, nothing more is known about the donation, but as Chichester is a coastal town it is likely that Miss Newman acquired the object from someone involved in maritime trade. A mask in the Museum of the Nantucket Historical Society may have been donated in 1852, but the records are fragmentary. In 1863 the National Museum of Denmark acquired a carved wooden mouthpiece[5] from the Australian Museum in Sydney. In 1867 Joseph Mayer, a local goldsmith

1. Wallace 1965: 190.
2. Whittaker *et al.* 1975: 292.
3. Rosman & Rubel 1998: 37.
4. Chicago Field Museum 276499.
5. National Museum of Denmark 7.15.1 (Ia.16).

Fig. 2
Eighteen men dancing on top of an eight-meter-tall bamboo fence. Nusavung village, New Hanover, northern New Ireland.
Photo taken during the 1907–1909 Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

and antiquarian, presented a large collection to the Liverpool Museum in the United Kingdom, including two *malagan* figures.[6] At that time, Liverpool's port was a thriving center of maritime commerce.

In museum collections, there are relatively few ritual objects that were carved with indigenous tools and it is difficult to be certain of exact carving methods. The majority of ritual objects from New Ireland in museums are *malagan* carvings from the northern half of the island, but it is unclear whether *malagan* production increased as a result of the introduction of iron, or whether the huge rise in the number of carvings collected after 1870 is merely a factor of increased contact with Europeans who were keen to purchase such objects. There are many objects in European museums that date from the decade prior to the declaration of the region as a German protectorate in 1884.

The German trading firm Godeffroy attempted to establish a trading station in New Britain in 1873, and it is likely that the firm, through its captains, collected in New Ireland from around this date. In 1875, Europeans started to reside more permanently in the region, with traders and missionaries establishing stations in the Duke of York Islands between New Ireland and New Britain. The Reverend George Brown was the first European missionary to visit New Ireland and he began collecting artifacts during his earliest travels to the west coast region where he stationed mission teachers. Brown amassed a large collection of objects from New Ireland and New Britain during his life, but it is impossible to establish the exact date of collection for many of these objects. We know that whilst he was stationed in the Duke of Yorks he collected weapons, clothing, *kulap* figures carved from chalk, and other objects from New Ireland. The naturalist James Cockerell, who accompanied him on his first trip to the region, probably collected a number of *kulap* figures also.[7]

A second German trading company run by Eduard Hernsheim also established a station in the Duke of York Islands in 1875, and Hernsheim collected a considerable number of artifacts. He displayed some in Hong Kong and also donated a large number of objects to various German museums. Hernsheim was the first to establish trading stations on New Ireland when he placed a trader at Nusa Island in 1880. He opened several more stations along the east coast shortly after, and although only a few of these endured, Hernsheim had a virtual monopoly on trading in the north and east of New Ireland until 1884.

Another big early trading firm on the Duke of York Islands was Farrell and Co., run by Thomas Farrell and his partner Emma Forsayth. The couple came to the islands

6. Liverpool Museum M 5020 A and B.

initially as agents for the Godeffroy firm at the end of 1878, but by 1881 they were operating independently. Farrell was interested in establishing trading stations and recruiting in northern New Ireland in the early 1880s, and it seems likely that he began collecting *malagan* and other New Ireland ritual artifacts on exploratory trips or through the traders whom he placed in east coast villages from 1884. These traders did not last long, but Farrell was a keen businessman who sought any opportunity for making money, and he must have decided that collecting artifacts to resell in Sydney or to other collectors was a profitable activity. Farrell's collection in the Australian Museum in Sydney is notable for the fact that some of the artifacts incorporate European materials. Other contemporary collectors, including Brown, seem to have avoided purchasing objects that displayed such a visual record of New Irelanders' contact with Europeans, but Farrell did not, and several of the *malagan* carvings he collected are decorated with blue paint, European cloth and beads, and have bottle glass instead of the traditional *Turbo petholatus* shell as eyes.

Another collector who purchased artifacts incorporating European materials was Hugh Romilly, British Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific. Romilly visited New Ireland in 1883 as part of his investigations into the recruiting of labor for Queensland sugar plantations. New Ireland had been severely affected by a number of visits by recruiting ships from Queensland, Fiji, and Samoa in 1881–1882. Offences committed by the Queensland ships had been reported to the authorities in Australia by missionaries and other concerned parties, including Hernsheim who was recruiting labor from northern New Ireland to work at his head station on New Britain. Romilly chartered a ship from Hernsheim and went up the New Ireland coast to Nusa and Kapsu hosted by Hernsheim's trader Brandt. Whilst at Kapsu, Romilly purchased what he described as an entire *malagan* "temple,"[8] consisting of at least 32 carvings, for the price of a large pig. Several of these carvings, now in the British Museum, incorporate European materials, and the blue paint used must have come from the synthetic ultramarine used as washing blue, known as Reckitts Blue or Berliner Waschblau. This blue could have entered indigenous trading systems through traders or recruiters, who carried it in the boxes they used to pay for recruits. It was probably introduced in 1880 or 1881, meaning that New Irelanders incorporated it into their ritual art very quickly.

New Ireland had a long, varied and evolving history of contact with Europeans from 1616 onward, and although there are not many artifacts in museums today that were collected before the 1860s, it is clear from documentary evidence that exchange was always a part of that contact. Weapons were probably the first artifacts to be collected, but objects from New Ireland's rich and varied artistic traditions were offered for trade from the 1860s onward. New Irelanders were keen to trade and quick to experiment with the objects that Europeans introduced into their society, for example iron, glass, cloth, and paints. Although some objects, like the *kulap* figures, seem to have been taken against the owners' will, in general the history of collecting in New Ireland before 1884 was not marked by theft or coercion. This eagerness to exchange and to experiment led to the extraordinarily diverse and imaginative objects from New Ireland in European museums today.

pl. 2
USA, Chicago, Field Museum.
276499
Wooden mask carved and painted in the northern style.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given to the Chichester Museum by Miss Newman of Midhurst in 1859. Acquired by the Field Museum from Captain A. W. F. Fuller in 1958.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; bark-cloth, coconut husk, fiber, resinous substance (probably adhesive putty *Parinarium laurinum.*)
H: 33; W: 26; D: 33 cm.

7. Macleay Museum 1573 and 1574.
8. Romilly 1893: 187.

New Ireland—a German colony and collectors

◂ I.4

Markus Schindlbeck

The proclamation of German sovereignty in 1884 did not bring German colonial rule to New Ireland immediately. At the beginning, nothing changed between settlers and villagers. The trading agents lived in surroundings threatened by attacks from villagers. In northern New Ireland, Kabien men attacked a trader in May 1885; the Kapsu people cut down coconut palms belonging to the Hernsheim Company and killed a European at Lessoa in September 1885.[1] The Imperial cruiser *Albatross* was called to assist as the New Guinea Company had no defenses. The naval forces on the *Albatross* landed several times in northern New Ireland to punish different villages and in some villages even met opposition. Generally, the islanders fled upon the approach of the warships; the German forces were not prepared to pursue the villagers into the unknown bush country. In all, the history of the 1890s is filled with tales of murdered traders and recruiters, the abuse of traders, and fighting between villages increasing through foreign influence. Thus, in the first years of colonial rule the inhabitants of the islands were influenced to little extent in their relations with foreigners, who were mainly traders.

By contrast, labor recruiting and labor trade in New Ireland was far more influential. The largest percentage of labor was recruited in the German colony of Melanesia from the island of New Ireland, in fact amounting to one third, i.e. more than 2,000 people in 1910.[2] Most of the men recruited in the Bismarck Archipelago came from northern New Ireland, mainly because of its shoreline. Not only men but also women left their villages, mostly to perform domestic service in colonial households. Hence, knowledge of the world of white men, as exemplified on plantations and recruiting ships, was widespread even before the colonial government imposed its rule. However the laborers took back not only knives and axes to their villages, but also hitherto unknown diseases, which reduced the population. Some New Irelanders never returned at all; they died on the plantations or drowned in the wreck of the ship transporting them. Thus, at the beginning of colonial rule, labor recruiting was restricted to northern New Ireland. After labor trade from New Guinea to Queensland and Fiji had almost ceased, New Ireland laborers went to Samoa and the mainland of New Guinea or to the Gazelle Peninsula.

Under colonial rule, another kind of change was introduced with the *luluai* system. Within a rather egalitarian society, new leadership structures were established which enabled outstanding men to attain more power and influence. The system is strongly connected with the person of Albert Hahl, who arrived in New Guinea in 1896, first as an Imperial judge and later as a governor. A further major change came in 1899 when the Imperial government assumed full power over German New Guinea.

The Germans used a large amount of white coral stone in constructing buildings on New Ireland. Even the roads were based on coral stone, which meant that they were usable even after heavy rains. The most famous road was the Boluminski road, constructed under the district official Franz Boluminski, which started in Kavieng and ran south for c. 180 km. The road linked distant villages, thus establishing new ways of communication between often hostile populations. During the German colonial period, the population of the northern district was estimated at around 20,300 people,

1. Firth 1982: 48.
2. Hiery 1995: 226.

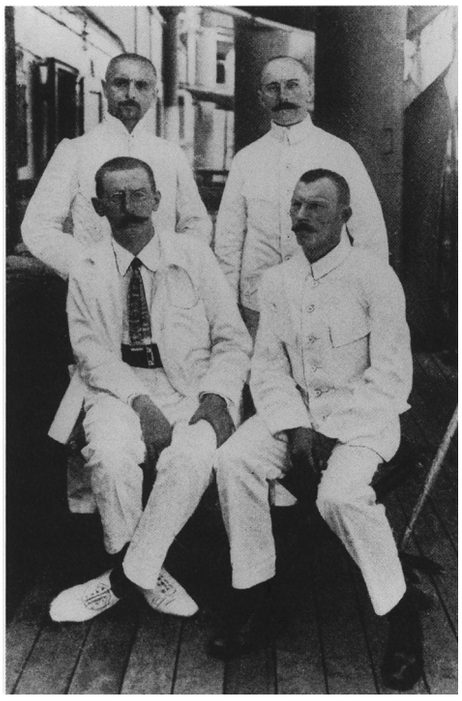


Fig. 3
Participants of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition: Emil Stephan, Otto Schlaginhaufen (at the back), Edgar Walden, Richard Schilling (from left to right.)

whereas the southern district was only sparsely populated and no censuses were carried out. The white population of New Ireland was not more than around 90 men and 20 women in 1913. Boluminski, who died on the island in 1913, was also a collector of art. He tried to bring the native population to accept the German system of law by introducing it step by step and not by enforcing it through imprisonment and other actions which would have been incomprehensible.[3]

The station of Kavieng (Käviéng) was founded in 1900 at the northwestern end of New Ireland. It was located on the strait between New Hanover and New Ireland and its harbor was protected by the island of Nusa. A station belonging to the Hernsheim Company had already existed on Nusa since the 1880s. Another station was Namatanai on the east coast of New Ireland. Thus, the island was divided into two districts. Even before German rule, there was a movement of peoples from the interior to the coast, and various villages were abandoned. The smaller, northern, part of the island underwent a rapid change because of the new road. Bridges and guest houses were built. The situation was different in the southern part with its difficult and mountainous terrain. At Namatanai there was the house of a trading company, buildings of the Catholic mission and, high on the hill, buildings for the police and workers. There, work had just started on roads and plantations. Wilhelm Wostrack established the Namatanai government station in 1904. Like many other government people, he also collected ethnographic objects, which he either sold or donated to museums. These changes in traditional culture influenced the location of people, their production of material culture, and their attitudes toward it.

On June 21, 1874 the German navy sent out the ship *Gazelle* to make observations of the passing of the planet Venus in front of the sun. Different crew members were assigned to take measurements and record observations. The officer Hermann Strauch was responsible for ethnographic collecting on the voyage. The ship arrived in New Guinea in June 1875. During the following months they took several measurements, also in the waters around New Ireland. The voyage of the *Gazelle* should be seen in relationship with the voyage of the British ship *Challenger*, which was also used for taking measurements. Strauch assembled a large collection of ethnographic objects from New Ireland, establishing therewith an important link between the navy and the Museum of Ethnology in Berlin. However, almost 30 years went by before another ship carried out similar work in the area. In 1904, the survey vessel *Möwe* with Emil Stephan undertook detailed studies in the southern part of New Ireland. Mainly the coastline was drawn for the making of nautical maps, and villages on the coast were visited. The collection made by Stephan, amounting to about 400 objects, was sent to the Museum of Ethnology in Berlin. It includes not only decorated objects or so-called "art pieces," but also a large number of everyday objects. In Stephan's description of the circumstances of his fieldwork, it is obvious that the disruption of the social and demographic situation by the colonial power had led to various changes: people settled in other places because they feared German punitive expeditions. Stephan's remark that in every village on the coast there were people who could understand Pidgin English is also a hint of cultural change at this time. There were also areas in the southern part of the island in which no traditional objects could be collected because of European influence.

3. Hiery 1995: 126.

The German colonial situation strengthened contact between the islands and promoted the exchange of objects. Today, it is rather difficult to estimate the amount of cultural trade goods that were transferred due to this improved contact. Recruited laborers took objects from their homes to the plantations, such as neck ornaments, combs, or lime containers. But they also collected objects and took them home after their work contract had ended.

Collecting was a widespread activity, not only for the few explorers and scientists. Traders, missionaries, and administration officials also strove towards acquiring ethnographic objects. Although viewed as a kind of pastime, collecting was mainly undertaken for financial profit or to gain prestige in one's own home country.

The long-established cooperation between the Imperial navy and research work was the starting point for the Deutsche Marine-Expedition from 1907–1909. The proposal for this expedition was made by the Museum of Ethnology in Berlin. Three scientists and one photographer were to be sent on the mission; the costs were estimated at 60,000 Marks. The largest contribution came from the Ministry of Education. This expedition is a good example of the strong interest of colonial institutions in the exploration and documentation of the island. Firstly, the whole Bismarck Archipelago was seen as a research object. Together with the governor Albert Hahl it was decided to conduct investigations only on New Ireland. They hoped to gain more insight through a better knowledge of indigenous languages. Also, the work was conducted in order to document already existing collections in European museums. Edgar Walden, who had worked in the Berlin museum, was appointed to carry out research in the northern part of the island. Emil Stephan and Otto Schlaginhaufen worked in the remaining areas and on the offshore islands. Governor Albert Hahl accompanied the expedition at the beginning in

▾ **Fig. 4**
Women prepare food from galip nuts and taro.
Southern New Ireland.
Photo probably taken by Richard Schilling.

▸ **Fig. 5**
Camp of the expedition near Unfutt.
Southern New Ireland.
Photo probably taken by Richard Schilling.

order to explain its aims to the indigenous population. Eight policemen, nine workers, three servants, and one cook were stationed at the expedition's base camp at Muliama.

The area along the eastern coast to the south of Namatanai was little known. Stephan planned to do documentation work there, making extensive use of the native languages, and in that he was a forerunner of fieldwork anthropologists. The photographer, for his part, was assigned to document the achievements of the colonial government and to render a positive image of the colony for the public. One of the aims of the administration was to analyze the reason for the decline in population. Schlaginhaufen was interested in physical anthropology and did some of the collecting work. Unfortunately, Stephan died in May 1908 and never published a final work on his research. Only Augustin Krämer, who succeeded Stephan as head of the expedition, and his wife Elisabeth Krämer-Bannow wrote extensively on the cultures of the island. Much later, in 1959, Otto Schlaginhaufen published his memoirs on the expedition. The largest part of the ethnographic collections consisting of about 900 pieces, was accumulated by Edgar Walden. But he died near Cernay during the First World War thus leaving his fieldwork notes unpublished.

Ritual, Life, and Art in New Ireland

II

pl. 21 (detail, see p. 68)

Restricted vs open ownership of art traditions

Michael Gunn

It is clear that, to a certain extent, art traditions are independent of the cultural institutions to which they are linked. Art traditions in New Ireland are localized systems of visual representation, much like visual languages.[1] Many have had a long history of development and are hundreds and possibly thousands of years old; others are more recent creations. Some of these art traditions are very well developed and used in a number of different contexts over a widespread area. Others are specifically regional and may have been used in a single context in a small cluster of villages on a remote coast.

Some art traditions are closely linked to particular cultural systems with which they interact to produce art-works for use in ritual or other contexts, especially those in which the production and use of specific art objects is owned or controlled by copyright. For example, the body masks and other art objects used by the *tubuan* society in the south are not used for any other purpose, and the art style that is used in *tubuan* is not used by any other cultural tradition. Further north, the use of the unique woven *malagan*, generally called *vavara*, was strictly controlled, and that style of object is not found outside the ritual context of *malagan*.

However, not every art tradition is inextricably linked to its associated cultural system. For example, the *malagan* cultural world uses several art traditions. The northern New Ireland art tradition is dominant, but other art traditions such as *vavara* are also used in *malagan*. In addition, the northern New Ireland art tradition used in the restricted *malagan* ritual system is also used by a number of other northern cultural institutions or performances such as *kipang* and *bual*.

Kipang (pronounced *kipong* throughout much of the mainland of New Ireland) is now a widespread cultural tradition found throughout most of New Ireland, where it is used as a performance without much apparent cultural significance. It had its origin on the island of New Hanover, where there is a well-developed body of oral tradition about a white-skinned cannibal called Kipang. Kipang looked like a short human, but

1. Each art tradition in New Ireland is the result of the development of an original creation, much as a tree full of leaves is the result of the growth of a single seed.

had no culture. He lived in caves and slept on the floor. He could not speak a recognizable language, but he grunted like a pig. Kipang was represented on New Hanover in masked performances that were made in the northern New Ireland style. Because *kipang* and *malagan* masks use the same art style, these masks have been frequently confused by outsiders (see fig. 6).

For many reasons, but primarily because the Kipang story was not restricted by copyright or other controls, the performance began to travel. People who had learned it in one area would move to another and teach it to people who would pay for it. The masks used in the dance were created from the local art tradition used in each area. Masks that featured characteristics such as white faces or lopsided mouths were widely recognized as masks used to represent Kipang. Among these was one collected by George Brown—a white-faced mask with a very broad nose and dominant brow now at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka[2]. Another similar-looking mask[3] was collected in the late 19th century with the closely related name of *gipong*—confirming the attributions of 21st-century New Irelanders. Krämer referred to the Hamburg mask as coming from northern New Ireland[4], and he collected a related mask (pl. 4) from the west coast Barok village of Kamalobuo. So it is possible that this group of masks was created in the Barok region.

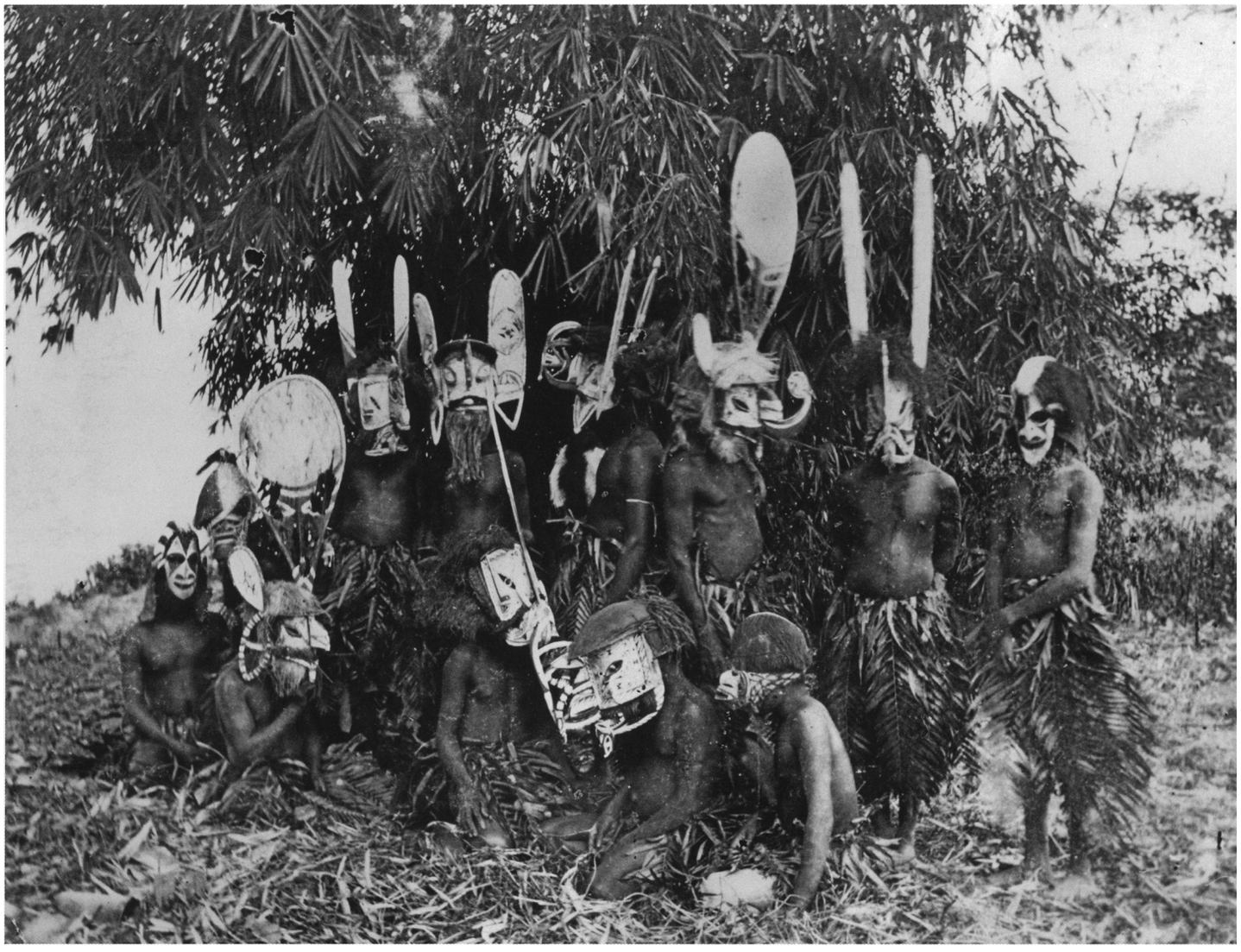
Another group of masks was also identified by New Irelanders as *kipang*. These are similar to the possibly Barok group of masks in that they have very broad noses, but the artistry is much more developed, and is particularly apparent in the sculptural details on masks such as Norwich UEA 941 (pl. 5). The double eyebrows, flared nostrils, and deep groove to hold a beard are particularly noteworthy. This mask, as a number of New Irelanders pointed out to us, has had the paint washed off, but otherwise is closely related to New York ST-2218 (pl. 6) with its beard, integrated ear loops, red painted Maltese crosses,[5] and red lines under the eyes and along each side of the ridge of the nose. Although we would like to attribute these two masks to the northern region based on the sculptural virtuosity that is so evident in the Norwich masks, there is no real evidence to support such an attribution.

Another interesting group of helmet masks that several present-day New Irelanders identified as a type probably used in *kipang* traditions is represented by Dresden 7172 (pl. 3). This piece was collected before 1879 and depicts half the mouth black and the other half white—a fashion in New Ireland at the time. Chewing betel nut stains teeth red, and this eventually blackens. At that time the fashion was to clean half the teeth with a light abrasive, producing a black and white effect. We have been able to locate this mask to a particular region in New Ireland through the stylistic red and yellow border pattern around the edge of the wooden section of the face. This pattern has also been found on a number of *uli* figures and on overmodeled skulls, suggesting that the masks bearing this mark were created in the same region—up in the mountains inland of present-day Konos and northwest of the Lelet Plateau. New Irelanders say that this pattern may well have been the mark owned by a clan.

One more mask that we should consider in this series is Berlin IV 2825 (pl. 7), which has a head covering that resembles a pith helmet and a large hooked nose. A second and almost identical mask of this type is in Hamburg;[6] both masks were collected

Fig. 6
Group of twelve men wearing masks that were identified in 2003 by a number of people on New Hanover Island as masks used in the *kipang* performances, not *malagan*. Two of these masks are now in the Queensland Museum: E 2454 is on the far right, E 5684 is on the far left.
Photo taken by Paul Schneider, 1886–1887.

2. Osaka H 136654.
3. Hamburg, Museum für Völkerkunde 87.84: 1.
4. Krämer 1925: Taf 75.
5. Painted "Maltese cross" style marks have been found on at least seven New Ireland objects, six of which are masks. The seventh is an *uli* figure. They all have the appearance of masks that were collected before 1884.
6. Hamburg, Museum für Völkerkunde E137.



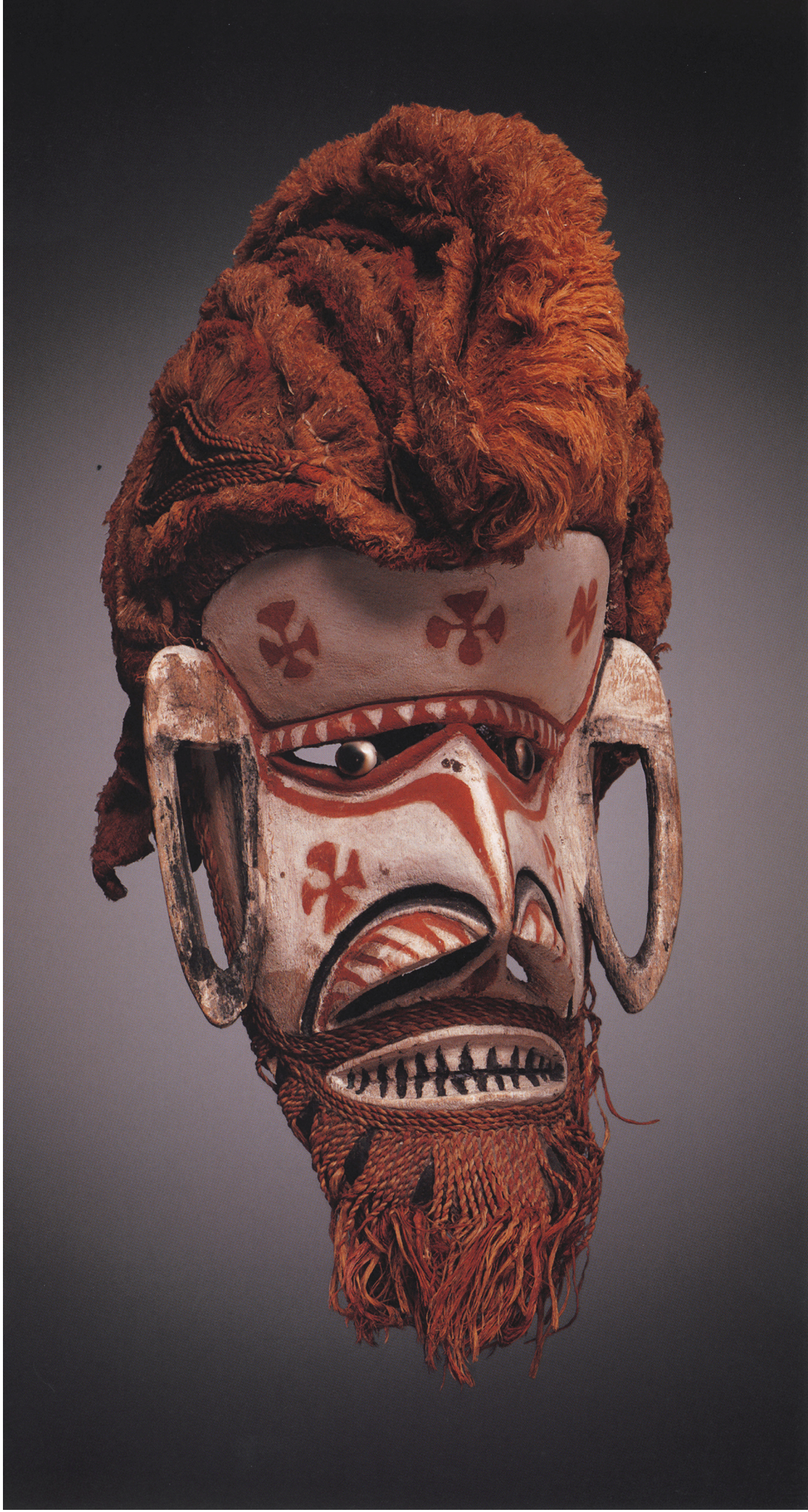
by Hernsheim & Co. before 1880. Our initial impression was that these two masks were portraits of a Western missionary, perhaps George Brown. But Brown did not visit the northern region until 1880, and at that time he was traveling with other Europeans on a brief sailing trip and made no attempt to missionize. New Irelanders today told us that they never made portraits of Westerners. Several of them identified these two masks as *kipang* masks from somewhere in the northern region.

◂ **pl. 3**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
7172
Helmet mask; the flaking white paint on the face is an undercoat which was made of lime from decomposed limestone from an ancient coral reef and found today up in the mountains north of the Lelet Plateau.
New Ireland, possibly from the inland Madak region [attributed MG].
Collected in New Ireland between 1860–1879.
Acquired from Museum Godeffroy, Hamburg, 1879.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*), bark-cloth, cane; lime, white, black, yellow, and red pigments; seeds, fiber, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), spiral shells.
H: 46; W: 21; D: 31 cm.

▸ **pl. 4**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
L.1482/38
Helmet mask with white painted face, recorded with the name *Kipong*.
Central New Ireland, west coast Barok region, Kamalobuo [now Komalabu] village [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland from Sogang, the village leader, by Augustin Krämer, 1909–1910.
Given to the museum by Krämer, 1913.
Wood; lime, orange paint, blue paint; fiber, manufactured textile, rattan, bark-cloth.
H: 42; W: 28; D: 41 cm.

◂ **pl. 5**
UK, Norwich, University of East Anglia, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.
UEA 941
Wooden mask with deep grooves in the accentuated eyebrows and flared nostrils; a deep trench to attach fiber can be seen in the moustache and beard region; the mask was collected before the painting was completed and the fiber decoration attached.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collected in New Ireland by the Methodist Missionary Rev. George Brown, 1875–1880.
Acquired from Hancock Museum, King's College, Newcastle, UK, in 1986; previously in the Bowes Museum, County Durham before 1954.
Wood; lime, red, black, and yellow pigments; fiber, manufactured string.
H: 26; W: 20; D: 22 cm.

▸ **pl. 6**
USA, New York, American Museum of Natural History.
ST-2218
Painted wooden helmet mask with Maltese crosses painted on face; sculpturally related to other masks with broad noses; identified by a number of New Irelanders in 2003 as a mask used in *kipang* performances.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Appleton Sturgis, 1891.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre; string, bark-cloth, rattan, fiber.
H: 27; W: 20; D: 43 cm.



◂ **pl. 7**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 2825
Painted wooden mask with a large hooked nose and white face; one of two known (the other is Hamburg E 137); possibly used in *kipang* performances.
Northern New Ireland, probably Tigak region [published attribution].
Collected in New Ireland 1879–1880 by Hernsheim & Co. Acquired 1880.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*), bark-cloth, seed burrs; lime, red ochre, black pigment; cane.
H: 28; W: 45.5; D: 46 cm.

▸ **pl. 8**
Hungary, Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum. 36890
Wooden mask with face overmodeled in beeswax; the eyes are covered with triangular shapes that block the wearer's direct vision; identified by people in New Hanover in 2003 as a *kol* (skull) mask used to represent the white-skinned cannibal Kipang.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland by Comte Rodolphe Festetics de Tolna, 1895–1896.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), beeswax, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), seed burrs, branchlets, cane, bark-cloth; lime.
H: 100; W: 18; D: 47 cm.

Ritual context

◂ II.2

Susanne Küchler

Malagan is the generic name for the spectacular secondary funerary ritual which orchestrates huge community resources and draws hundreds of participants to the final three days of feasting. This final event in a commemorative cycle takes place sometimes more than a decade after a burial and may stretch over several weeks that are punctuated by the stages of carving which culminate in the painting of the figure and the insertion of "eyes." Alternative materials and techniques, allowing for rapid production, may be used should a death have occurred shortly prior to or during the preparation of secondary burial in the village. When installed in a structure on the burial ground, the effigy is said, in the Kara region, to be alive. The height of the *malagan* ceremony is the dramatic revelation of this effigy, followed moments later by the activation of its death so that the person's soul may achieve immortality, the "empty remains" of effigies being taken to the forest to be left to decompose, while certain other ones are burned, and yet others taken to the mission to be sold to collectors.

We have come to associate *malagan* primarily with the figure itself. Carved from wood, woven from vines or moulded into clay, *malagan* is enlivened as "skin" and is ultimately sacrificed, both effecting in its death the release of the dead person's soul from its earthly trappings and initiating an exchange with the ancestral realm. The "death" of the figure leaves behind a named and remembered image which can be recalled in order to re-direct ancestral power to the land of the living. The figure is thus an instance of a polity of images, access to which defines rank, authority, and rights to land.

The ritual context of *malagan* is thus death, which in New Ireland is a process of consumption that absorbs and re-channels anything "left over" from a person's life in a performative act involving the creation of predominantly spatial images of containment. The work for the dead is fittingly described as "finishing the dead;" it is a process enacted through multiple, cumulative images of effacement that culminate in the dramatic death of a *malagan* effigy which served to recapture the soul freed from its bodily trappings. *Malagan* thus reverses the ritual work of death and simulates in its composition the prior process of "decomposing" persons.

Following death, a large number of minor and major rituals trace the changing state of the corpse and that of the mourners; social relations of which the deceased person had been a part are dissolved, as traces of the person's work and life are internalized in acts which consist of the ceremonial consumption of the deceased's garden produce and the ceremonial "burning" of the house. The physical separation of body and soul is thus enacted analogically in performances that, step by step, undo the traces left by a person in the social matrix. Yet this is not the end of the story. Once the material traces of the person have been effaced, an inverse process of building up an artificial "social" body as the new container for the soul is set to follow. This time, the analogical relation between the state of the social body and the state of the soul is explicitly iconic. The death and climactic destruction of the new

pl. 9
Netherlands, Leiden, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde.
746-5
Basketry headdress based loosely on the shape of a bird; possibly from New Hanover where a similar headdress was said to have been worn by a woman when she moved about the village, after the death of her husband, until after the final commemorative feast organized by her husband's clan.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired 1889.
Fiber, bark-cloth; lime, red ochre; shell (*Turbo petholatus*).
H: 64; W: 93; D: 15 cm.

artificial body completes a process of replacement, of persons by things and things by images. By translating the object into an image that anticipates the repeatability of this process, power can be arrested in a specific place. It is this last product of substitution, the *malagan* image, so easily overlooked in the scheme of things, that elicits a new beginning as it becomes the focal point and operative logic of all future forms of social relations.

Kinship, marriage, and land

◂ II.3

Michael Gunn

Marriage in New Ireland is the primary social contract, bonding groups of families into alliances that are mutually beneficial. During the early contact period, before the Western presence was strongly felt, New Ireland was a dangerous place, for there were no external forces to control people's violent tendencies. During that time villages generally consisted of one primary clan that owned the land, which included the men whom the women of this clan had married. Laws prohibiting incest were strictly enforced, and in many regions young men had to go outside the village to find wives.

New Irelanders are matrilineal, in that they trace descent through the mother, and the mother's brother is the most significant authority figure in a child's life. Land is generally owned by a clan or sub-clan and is passed to the next generation through the mother's line. A man will most often work the land that belongs to his wife's people, so he is always in a subordinate position to his wife's brother, to whom he must pay respect. The mother's brother is the disciplinarian of the children. The father is a loving figure.

In the early contact period an ideal relationship was one that matched people from a coastal village and those from farther inland. If a series of marriages linked these two places, then a cooperative defense relationship would develop. The inland village was usually located on a steep mountain ridge and could be easily fortified, while the coastal village would offer access to fish, salt, and trade. In times of trouble the coastal people could retreat to the fortified inland site.

The actual ceremony of marriage, despite its political significance, is usually a rather brief affair conducted in the open village plaza and primarily consists of an exchange of lengths of shell money. In the northern region the man's clan generally gives these to the bride, who then either keeps the shell money herself or gives it to her clan leader for safekeeping.

In the Barok region, north of the narrow isthmus of central New Ireland, painted bark-cloth pieces were used in marriage ceremonies in the early 20th century.[1] Little is known about the role these pieces played in the ceremony, or what the images portrayed. The images appear to represent two clans. Brisbane E 1566-2 (pl. 12) may represent two sources of life, two "eyes of fire" together on the one piece of bark-cloth. Sydney E 35077 (pl. 11) may represent another version of two "eyes of fire" linked together in a very evocative manner. Brisbane E 1566-3 (pl. 10) is another interpretation in which one "eye of fire" is depicted in a nurturing enclosure, possibly a reference to a developing embryo. The style of these pieces is related to the northern New Ireland art tradition.

1. Three of the known painted bark-cloth pieces (Brisbane E 1566-1, 2, 3) were acquired in 1922 from Mr. A. H. Peters. Registration data refers to Namatanai locality and states "Used by a chief to put up on tent when daughter married into another tribe." Namatanai locality could be read to include the Barok region, which begins only 15km north of the town of Namatanai. Two closely related painted bark-cloth pieces (Sydney E 35076 and E 35077) were collected by R. Holdsworth from Komalabu village, west coast Barok region, and donated to the Australian Museum in Sydney in 1932. They are registered with the annotation "Decorated bark, wall panelling, chiefs houses."

pl. 10
Australia, Brisbane, Queensland Museum.
E 1566-3
Painted bark-cloth, used as bride price when the child of a chief gets married. The design may represent a child growing inside a woman.
Central New Ireland, Patpatar region, Namatanai locality [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Mr. A. H. Peters, 1922.
Bark-cloth; red pigment, slate-blue-green pigment.
L: 43; W: 20; D: 0.5 cm.

pl. 11
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 35077
Painted bark-cloth, used as bride price when the child of a chief gets married. The design may represent an image of a woman's breasts.
Central New Ireland, west coast Barok region, Komalabu village [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated by R. Holdsworth, 1932.
Bark-cloth; red pigment, slate-blue-green pigment.
L: 41.5; W: 21.5; D: 0.25 cm.

pl. 12
Australia, Brisbane, Queensland Museum.
E 1566-2
Painted bark-cloth, used as bride price when
the child of a chief gets married. The design
may represent hanging testicles.
Central New Ireland, Patpatar region,
Namatanai locality [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Mr. A. H. Peters, 1922.
Bark-cloth; red pigment, slate-blue-green pigment.
L: 46.5; W: 21; D: 0.25 cm.

▾ **pl. 13**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
26323
Woman's hat made from folded pandanus leaf; known as *kapil* on New Hanover, or *arektek* in the Nalik region; previously worn by married women in many parts of New Ireland, especially during ceremonial occasions.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known, probably late 19th century. Probably acquired in 1902 from Dr. Hagen.
Pandanus leaf, fiber string.
H: 39; W: 26.5; D: 2 cm.

▸ **pl. 14**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
84384
Woman's pandanus leaf cape with pattern cut into one edge; in the northern region these capes were used during the marriage ceremony when the bride price was placed on them, afterwards they could be used as a rain cape or to carry a baby.
Northern New Ireland, Tigak region, Kavieng [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Augustin Krämer in 1909–1910 and given to the museum by him in 1913.
Pandanus leaf, fiber; red pigment.
L: 133; W: 64; D: 5 cm.

pl. 15
Switzerland, Basel, Museum der Kulturen.
Vb 10696
String of ground shell discs with decorated nut attached to end; used by clan leaders. In 2003 a man living on the Lelet Plateau said that this was called *laxan bongas*—meaning "the basis of a men's house."
Northern New Ireland, Lelet Plateau,
Boram village [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Alfred Bühler, 1931.
Shell, string, seedcase, glass beads, dog teeth.
L: 74; W: 4.5; D: 1.5 cm.

pl. 16
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
51526
Woven fiber container in the shape of a fish's head;
probably used to store lengths of ancestral shell money.
Northern New Ireland, Tabar Islands
[registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Franz Büttner, Dresden, 1950.
Fiber, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red pigment.
H: 8; W: 17; L: 24 cm.

Symbols of power and leadership

◂ II.4

Graeme Were

One of the most compelling art-works from northern New Ireland is a provocatively patterned shell valuable worn round the neck of high-ranking people. Known as *kapkap*, its visual effect relies as much on its composition—it is composed of a shiny white disc of ground and polished clam shell overlaid with a dark piece of finely carved turtle shell, secured together with a length of cordage or shell string—as it does for its striking geometric designs of triangles and circles that radiate out from its center with machine-like precision (see pl. 17). Collected in vast numbers during the late 19th and early 20th century from northern New Ireland, New Hanover, St. Matthias Islands, the Tabar Group, Lihir, and Nissan Island (as well as similarly designed ones from the neighboring Admiralty Islands, Bougainville and the Solomons), the *kapkap* still maintains its importance in funerary rites and is regarded as a symbol of clan strength for the special powers it is believed to harbor.

pl. 17
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum. 30119
Known as *kapkap* in Tok Pisin; made from a clam shell ground into a disc shape, with the circular design carved in turtle shell. Worn throughout New Ireland by leaders as a symbol of clan strength.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Probably acquired in 1903 from Franz Boluminski.
Clam shell, turtle shell, string, glass bead.
Diameter: 12.8 cm.

*Kapkap*s are only revealed publicly during mortuary feasting by clan leaders when worn around the neck, hung like a medallion. When warfare was endemic in New Ireland, a warrior chief would also wear a *kapkap* during raids on rival settlements. Clan leaders are high-ranking people (usually men) who have acquired special powers to speak on behalf of land-holding clans. These powers are transferred to them at a special initiation ceremony held during mortuary feasts. The initiate climbs on top of a specially constructed wooden platform, standing astride a number of dead pigs lying on top. Clutching a spear and dressed in a feather headdress, leaf armlets, and with lime powder daubed on his skin, he receives his first *kapkap* carved by a skilled artist living in a nearby hamlet. Once initiated, the *kapkap* entitles the wearer to adjudicate in land disputes, act as an authority on traditional law, and orchestrate mortuary ceremonies on land belonging to a clan whose rights he has just acquired. In fact, a clan leader can attain the right to speak for any number of clans during his lifetime, a process that may take many years.

As a clan leader acquires the power to act on behalf of another clan, so a new *kapkap* is carved to reflect the wearer's new status with each new initiation. The size of the clam shell disc and the number of concentric bands on the turtle-shell pattern are indicative of the number of clans that the wearer has been initiated into and can henceforth speak for. Thus, a clan leader's first *kapkap* has one circular band of radial geometric patterns. Three concentric bands indicate the power to speak for three clans. The resulting effect is that the *kapkap* increases in surface area as more power is attained. In turn, this entails that the wearer may speak in an ever-widening circle of village hamlets belonging to the land-holding clans who initiated him, thus exerting his influence and *kapkap* beyond his natal village.

It is often said that the geometric designs on the *kapkap* are religious symbols or genealogies. The minute variations in the design of the turtle-shell pattern act in a similar manner to the variations in the composition of *malagan* carvings: stress is placed on artists to design *kapkap* patterns following a standard form but with just enough leeway to appear slightly different from one another. These "same but different" ideas

expressed in the *kapkap* give subtle indications of the way northern New Irelanders perceive their history, rights to land, and their kin relations as a complex network of interconnected strands not too dissimilar from one another.

pl. 18
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
55738
Man's wig; probably used in southern central
New Ireland during ceremonial occasions,
such as the ordination of a clan leader.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Bezirkschef Wilhelm Wostrack, Namatanai,
New Ireland, 1908.
Fiber; lime paste.
H: 17; W: 10; L: 25 cm.

pl. 19
Switzerland, Basel, Museum der Kulturen.
Vb 10615
Red feather armband or headdress; used during public performances.
Northern New Ireland, Madak Malom region, Kónombu (now Kanabu) village [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Alfred Bühler, 1932.
Red, white, and black feathers, pandanus leaf, twigs, beads probably made from coconut shell, shell (*Turbo petholatus*), fiber, string.
H: 20; W: 26.5; D: 1 cm.

Sorcery, magic, and the spirit world

◂ II.5

Sean Kingston

Artistic productions and performances in New Ireland are inseparable from human interactions with the spirit world and, more importantly, they are the primary media for the exercise of spiritual power in agonistic struggles between competing men (mainly) for sex, status, and resources. As such, they are oft-cited causes of jealousy and consequent sorcery. Dance regalia, masks, and art objects present a continuum of "impersonations" of spiritual beings and of access to the powers they hold.

In southern New Ireland, male dancers at funerals are usually "lesser approximations" of *tubuan*, or perhaps of bull-roarer spirits, in their decorations, dance, and powers. A successful incarnation of a spirit in a dance, a mask, or a numinous art-work entails various physical preparations of the body on behalf of the performer or artist: fasting and making it "dry;" the invocation of spiritual assistance; and the correct application of appropriate, owned decorations and regalia. The summoning of spiritual powers to aid or inhabit such performances or transformations itself often involves the use of transitory visual icons. The spirits called upon are ancestors and, very commonly, shape-changing "place-spirits" that reside in the ocean, caves, or other

◂ **Fig. 7**
Dancers as "lesser approximations" of *tubuan*.
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

▸ **Fig. 8**
A dancer possessed by *pampam* (carried in his hand). The dancer behind is holding him down to stop him "flying."
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

auspicious locations. Python motifs, as one of the characteristic forms of place-spirits, figure prominently in such magical procedures; sea eagles, crocodiles, and wild pigs are drawn on the sand as part of *iniet* sorcerers' procedures for transforming themselves into these dangerous animals as part of sorcery attacks.

In New Ireland, attaining the spiritual condition required by a successful performance is frequently equated with a construction of masculinity that links danger and sexuality. Even as a headdress or mask may be dangerous to audiences, particularly women, and its owner may be magically attacking competing performances, one of its central roles will be to serve as "love magic," *malerra*, that arouses the desire of the watching women. This is most overt in the case of the masked creations of that name that parade before women at female initiations,[1] but it applies equally to the most feared *tubuan*.

Some spiritual performances have characteristics of "possession," apparently removing a person's conscious control, often via the catalyst of an artifact that acts as a "lightning conductor" to the encroaching spirit. The most popular in dance presentations is known as *pampam*, a possession device thought to have spread north through New Ireland from the Duke of York Islands. Though designs vary, the surface of these distinctive objects almost always features an "eye" design and fringe of pig bristles, their interiors should contain a fragment of human bone. Such bones, or teeth, are deemed ideal avenues for spiritual influence; similarly it is not uncommon for a deceased's relative's tooth to be kept in an attempt to extend their protective influence. In the case of *pampam*, the bone becomes a receptacle for a place-spirit, and causes the perfumed and decorated dancer to shake violently. The dancer evinces an aura of power and danger, often leaping into the air as if to take off like a bird, sometimes accompanied by clouds of ensorcelled lime.

There are a number of "schools" of both creative and destructive magic. A moderately recent introduction, on the creative side, renowned for providing inspiration for numerous songs and designs, is *buai*, named after the betel nut that is central to its practice. More ancient to New Ireland, in fact sometimes conjectured to be dying out, *iniet* is famed and feared for its practitioners' ability to "eat" their enemies from the inside. Both positive and negative magical capacities are closely guarded secrets, acquisition of which involves apprenticeship to adept and strenuous initiatory procedures. The responsibility for sorcery attacks causing death and illness may itself be ascertained by spiritual means, often through techniques of divination involving the possession of a artifact that provides a host for the victim's spirit. Retribution may be sought by magical or physical means.

pl. 20
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
13649
Known as *langaron*, or *pampam*, or *kangal*, in some regions this object is associated with trance dances, in others it is used merely as a dance ornament worn in the hair.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland, probably 1899. Given by Rudolf von Bennigsen, Gouverneur of Kaiser Wilhelmsland (German New Guinea), 1901.
Pig bristles, feathers, fiber, shell, bone.
H: 34; W: 24; D: 15 cm.

1. These *malerra* date at least to the early part of the 20th century, see description and illustration in Krämer-Bannow 1916.

Life-force and body concepts [I]

◂ II.6

Michael Gunn

New Irelanders regard their own thought processes as very organic, and many of their analogies are botanical in origin. Some of the roots of their philosophical system are thousands of years old and have the same sources as many other groups in this part of the world, including the Australian Aboriginal peoples with their concept of the Dreaming. Primarily New Irelanders emphasize the link between mother and child, and between a people and their land. In New Ireland, as in many other places in Melanesia and Australia, each land-owning clan has specific locations in the earth that are considered "active," associated with an animal species, and linked to the people that belong to the clan.[1]

Within New Ireland there are many variations on the concept that Westerners refer to as "spirit" or "soul." Concepts used in the Kara region in the north of the mainland, for example, are not the same as those on Tabar. On Tabar there are at least seven other expressions that refer to the essence that has vanished when someone has died. These are:

- *tadar* (n): Totem; a generic term for a *masalai* ancestral spirit; defines land ownership; major form of matrilineal affiliation. Not depicted in *malagan* on Tabar.

- *tanua* (also *miteno*) (n): Spirit or soul of person who died of sorcery or sickness; a general name for someone who has died; a corpse of someone who died a natural death; termed *tambaran* in Tok Pisin. *Tanua* is the name given to several types of mask that are used to perform a number of functions in both funerary and commemorative *malagan* ceremonies.

- *virua* (n): Corpse or spirit of unnatural death; spirits that walk about during rain or whirlwind, hence an association with rainbow, they hunt fish. Not depicted in *malagan*.

- *tironga* (n): Protective spirit; the soul of a deceased relative or friend; if a person is killed by a sorcerer then the ghost is *tironga*. A person can communicate with a *tironga* via a relic, which may be the home of the *tironga*; the relic is a part of the corpse, such as hair or a tooth, and is suspended above the bed so that communication about the future may occur in dreams.

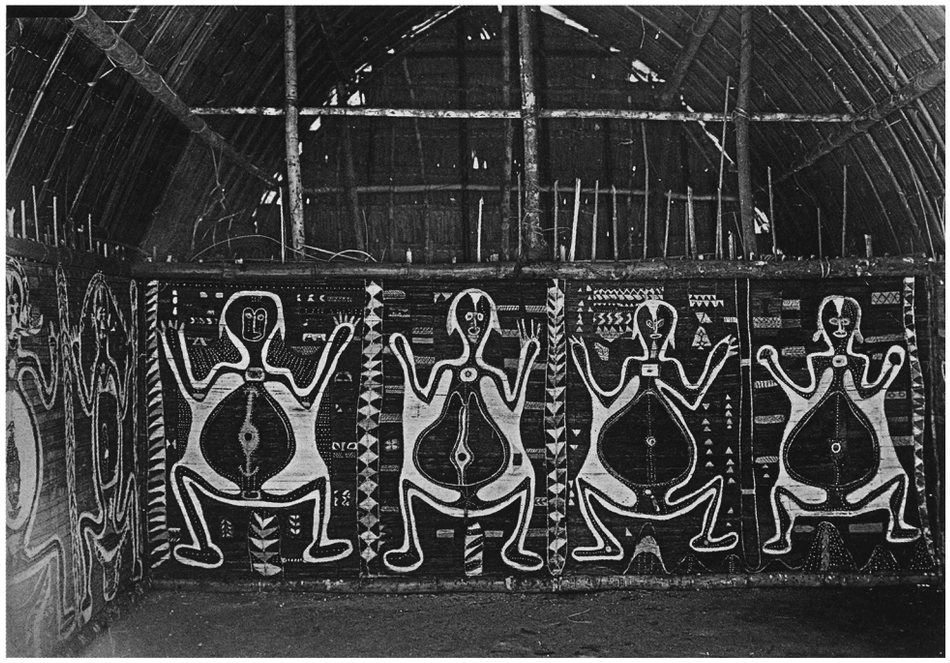
- *marumarua* (n): Picture of a person, image, shadow from light, silhouette, or sketch. Also used as one of the words for a person's spirit. Depicted in *malagan* as the carved and painted human-like figure.

- *patsapatsa* (n): Analogy; substitute for a clan; picture of a person or of anything, including a mirror image; an image in the imagination, but connected to the imager's clan; associated with the life-force in the sense that the *tadar* controls the *patsapatsa*.

- *mataling* (n): An analogy for the life-force that is passed from one generation to the next is the "eye of fire", known as *mataling* on Tabar. It is an image that is often depicted on art-works from the northern region of New Ireland.

1. This series of links is known as *masalai* in Tok Pisin.

Fig. 9
Panels inside a women's taboo house (Berlin VI 34041 [pl. 22] center, Berlin VI 34042 [pl. 21] to the left). Although originally described as "bound death images called *bongas*", they have been more recently described by a woman in a neighboring village as panels depicting various stages of a woman's sexual maturity.



In 1907–1909 two remarkable panels (see pl. 21 and 22) were collected from a women's taboo house in the village of Lakúrumau, east coast Nalik-speaking region. They were made in a style not known from anywhere else in New Ireland and are the only examples of their type. Women's taboo houses were known from many parts of New Ireland, particularly in the early contact period, and had been known to Westerners as girls' confinement houses because they were used for secluding girls during the onset of puberty and sometimes were so small that they were barely larger than the girl. In some areas the taboo houses were also used to confine women during their first pregnancy.

The following information was supplied to us by Nita Malvu who lived at Fatmilak, a neighboring village to Lakúrumau. When she was young she had been kept in a girls' taboo house, called *aval xoxok* in the Nalik language. As they entered the beginning phases of puberty, after they had experienced one or two menstrual periods, girls who were to become clan leaders were separated from the rest of the village and kept in special taboo houses constructed for that purpose. Often the girls' taboo houses were built in the men's house area, which was kept separate from the open village. Inside, the girls would be instructed in their responsibilities as clan leaders, in the songs and traditions of their people, and in the nature of their role in life.

In some parts of the northern region, the girls would be enclosed for up to three months. They would be allowed out only for essential purposes, and then they would have to be escorted so that their virginity could be assured. When the time came for their debut into open society, the girls were cleaned and washed, painted, and decorated with shell money. They were then taken out into the main ceremonial area in which a *malagan* ceremony was taking place and positioned as part of the ceremonial sequence. After the ceremony had concluded, they would marry the young men who had been chosen for them by their clan leaders.

pl. 22
Berlin VI 34041

These two panels were collected by Edgar Walden of the Deutsche Marine Expedition with no documentation other than their name (*bongas*). We showed photographs of these panels to Nita Malvu, who commented on them over a two-day period, and in conclusion said that the images may have been instructional pictures to show the girls how to look after their pregnancy. Her comments give us an insight into body concepts and ideas about pregnancy in the Nalik region.

Right: young virgin, before first menstruation.

2nd from right: first menstruation.

2nd from left: a woman with a blocked womb. A woman must take care of her navel (*akambirum*), for there is an inner part of the navel that the woman must look after or the baby will miscarry. Sometimes women use a bush medicine to block conception. This image may have been used to show what can go wrong with local contraceptive medicine. One type of medicine is effective in preventing conception for a while, but other types can cause infertility and eventual death.

Left: the woman has had sexual intercourse with a man and her womb is open. The navel (*akambirum*) is the basis for the pregnancy to develop. The *akambirum* is like the ground that a person stands on, or like the earth in which a flower grows. The arrow shape shows that when the man has ejaculated inside the woman, her body holds the sperm inside her. In this image her uterus has shortened so her husband cannot have sex with her anymore—she is tender and his erect penis would cause her pain. When a woman becomes pregnant she does not have sexual intercourse any more until after the child is born. The white section around the body in this image shows the woman's body condition—fat and healthy. It changed with her first menstruation and then became healthy again. Although this seems contradictory, Nita felt that the woman portrayed in this image had had many men, she wasn't happy, her skin was slack, and she had some kind of disease.

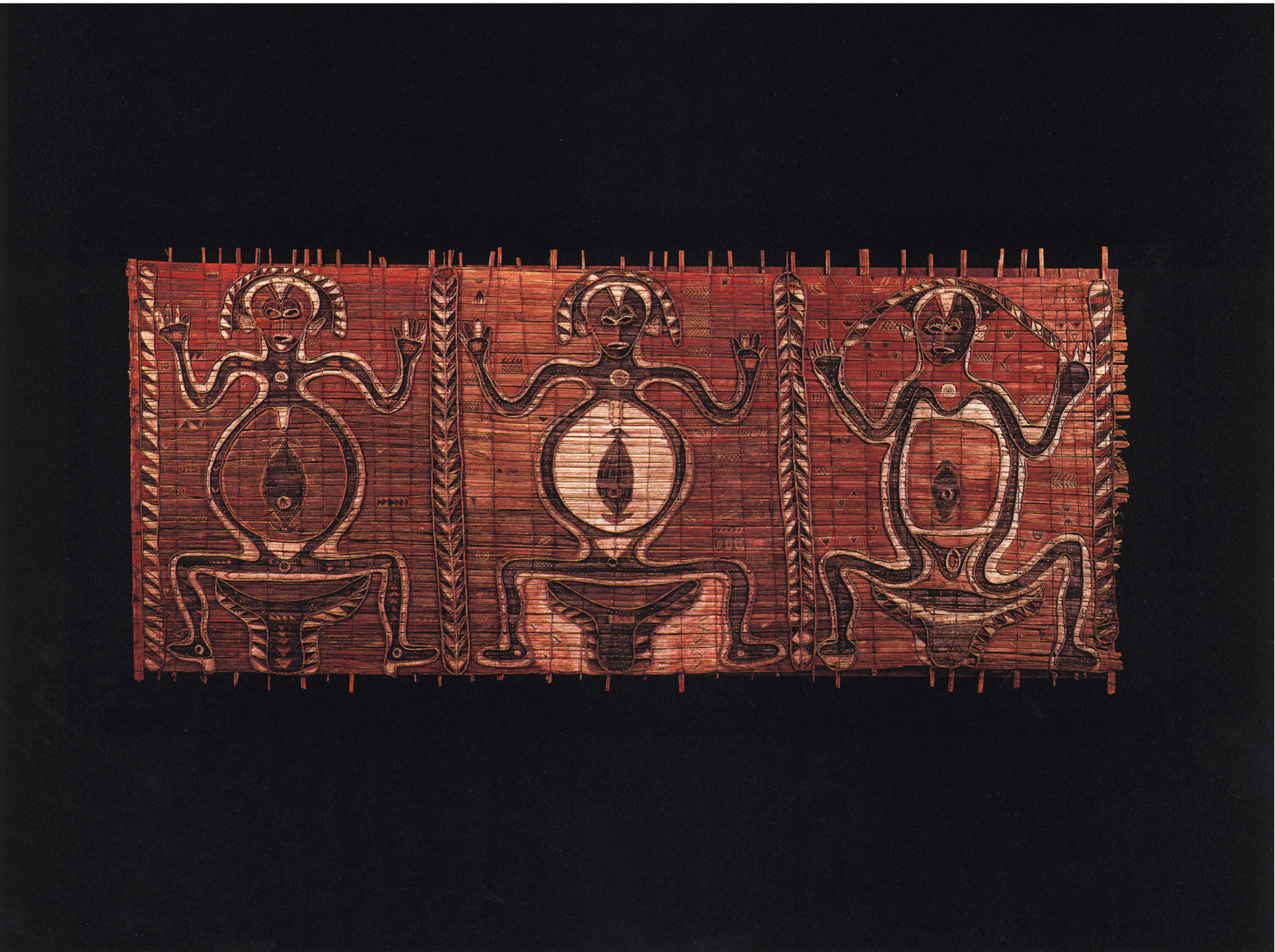
pl. 21
Berlin VI 34042

Left: the woman is now pregnant. The child is growing and the woman has lost a lot of her physical condition. The womb has shortened arrow shapes on both sides—showing that the woman is thinking of her baby and that the baby is secure. The stool shape under the woman may represent something associated with signs of life. A living person has "rope" connecting meat and bones, there is a living tension in a human body; a dead person has no "rope." The woman may be wearing a type of headdress, perhaps something to mark marriage and pregnancy.

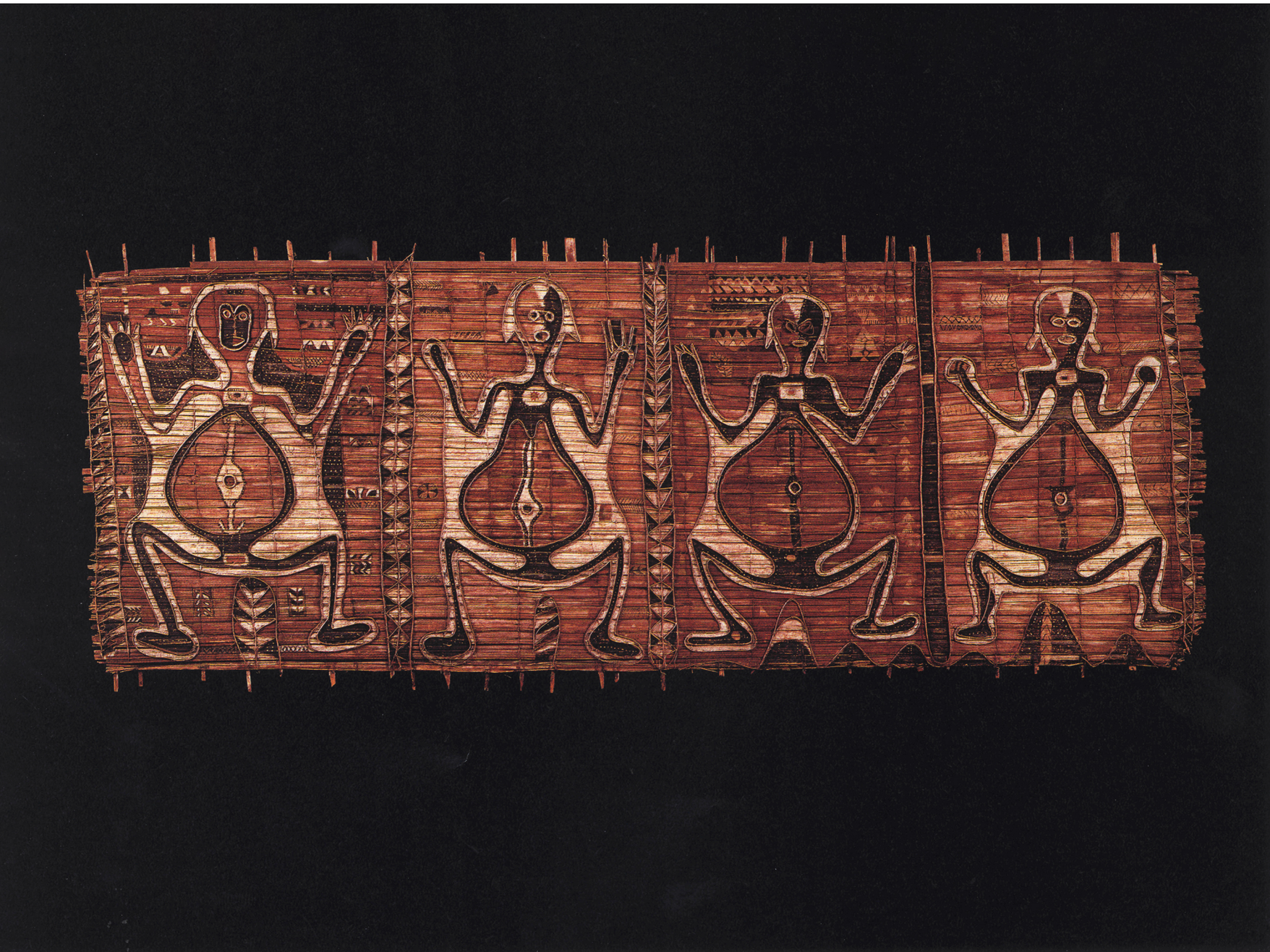
Center: developing pregnancy, just before birth.

Right: birth of the child.

pl. 21
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 34042
Set of four painted cane and fiber panels (*bongas*) from the interior of a women's initiation house, each panel features an x-ray type female figure depicted in one of various stages of sexual maturity.
Northern New Ireland, east (north) coast Nalik region, Lakúrumau (now Lakuramau) village [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Edgar Walden, Deutsche Marine-Expedition, 1907–1909.
Acquired 1910.
Palm leaf stems; lime, red and black pigments; fiber.
H: 140; D: 4; L: 309 cm.



pl. 22
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 34041
Set of four painted cane and fiber panels (*bongas*) from the interior of a women's initiation house, each panel features an x-ray type female figure depicted in one of various stages of sexual maturity.
Northern New Ireland, east (north) coast Nalik region, Lakúrumau (now Lakuramau) village [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Edgar Walden, Deutsche Marine-Expedition, 1907–1909.
Acquired 1910.
Palm leaf stems; lime, red and black pigments; fiber.
H: 128; D: 4; L: 345 cm.



Life-force and body concepts [2]

Susanne Küchler

In the Kara region the body is thought to be composed of perpetually fusing inner and outer elements; that is, of a skin (*tak*) and an inner life-force (*noman*) that permeates the membrane and may escape from it temporarily during sleep or permanently at death. As a container of life-force, a person's skin is thought to be changing from being dry and seemingly male to being wet or female in a process that starts prior to conception and finishes at death. At birth and at death, skin is in its wettest, most permeable, and most female state, while during the rest of life it is gradually hardened through prescribed fasts that extract liquid from the skin until it becomes fully dry or male in the adult man and woman; in old age, skin returns again to its wet state through a diet rich in liquid.

A complex relation exists between the physical covering and social space, giving rise to notions of the "doubleness" of being: one marked by the passing of time, the other by its arrest. Those elderly who have returned to a pure liquid diet are rehoused inside an enclosure where, years after their death, *malagan* are to be carved, and where, in the months after the death of a person, his or her garden produce is ceremonially consumed. This enclosure is surrounded with perishable fencing made of bamboo and wood, its material and technique of construction being specific to each community. A second enclosure made of stone surrounds the burial ground itself, the place where *malagan* makes its appearance to reveal the triumph of life over death as the mortal body of man is transfigured into the immortal, "social" state of the soul. Settlements move around this "hard" and permeable inner core of a village in a process that is punctuated by moments of ending: where once a bamboo enclosure witnessed the carving of *malagan*, garden-land known as "the place of the skin" soon takes over, while gardens whose produce fed the carver and the mourners during the period of feasting are turned into new sites for houses.

pl. 23
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 55245
Malagan figure with a carved wooden head and a body covered with braided fiber; at an earlier stage of its life this figure wore leather shoes, now missing. Northern New Ireland, east coast Madak region, Lamasong village [original field data]. Collected in New Ireland by the Catholic missionary P. Gerhard Peekel, 1910–1932 and deposited in the Hiltrup Mission Museum. Acquired 1987. Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*), braided pandanus leaf fiber; lime, yellow, red, and black pigments; manufactured textile, plant material. H: 133; W: 82; D: 80 cm.

Dream

◂ II.7

Susanne Küchler

All names referring to *malagan* figures in the Kara region are names carried by persons; and it is through the element of recognition that is implied in this relationship that figurative art in northern New Ireland demonstrates its mimetic character. The relation, however, is not referential in the sense we would expect, as the figures do not "look like" the persons who carry their name or are marked by them at death. The "likeness" (*malagan*) that is captured by the funeral portrait is directed to an inward state of being, to the life-force or soul. For, contained within its bodily envelope during life, the soul is set free by the ritual actions following death; roaming in the village, the souls of the dead are a volatile presence, bringing sickness and unrest. To recapture these souls is paramount and so the soul is made to re-enter the body of a person. This person is the carver of *malagan* who is known for his ability to "see inwardly" in dreaming and to transform what he has captured in dream into a new artificial container for the soul.

As an impression of what can only be imagined, the soul is given shape in the haunting look of *malagan* which recalls the active space between life and death. Incised almost to the point of breakage, the emerging fretwork is covered with depictions of birds, pigs, fish, and seashells that appear almost lifelike; the same can be said for the figure set within the fretwork, which appears to stare at the beholder with eyes that could hardly be more vivid. It surely must have been the dreamlike quality of the animate surface of *malagan* that inspired Surrealist artists to collect *malagan* and draw upon them for inspiration for works such as Giacometti's *La Cage* or Henry Moore's sculpture entitled *Upright Internal and External Forms*.[1] Motifs appear enchained as figures standing inside the mouth of rock-cods, framed by many different kinds of fish that bite into limbs and chins, birds that bite into snakes and snakes into birds, and the skulls of pigs that appear to metamorphose into birds. Inner shapes appear enclosed by outer frames in ways that contest the apparent reality of what is depicted like a vision in a dream. The figures give the impression of making connections visible as processes, but also visibly play with resemblance, as one figure appears to comment on another, being both similar and yet different.

All *malagan* are thus dreamt prior to being given their form, even if they are known by their name to those who no longer are allowed to utter the names of the dead. The carver, known as the "joiner of skin" (*retak*), is usually a man of middle age who has realized, often late in life, his ability to recapture in wood what he has seen in his dream. There are only a few carvers at any one time, serving numerous villages up and down the coast of New Ireland, often being called for months at a time to work on visualizing a dream inside a hut which is built where the dead once were left to rest prior to burial and where the "social" body in the form of garden produce was left to decompose before being reincorporated into the bodies of the living. His contact with the soul in its volatile and dangerous state makes this a treacherous existence; fed an odorous and greasy dish of sliced taro and grated coconut wrapped in banana leaves normally reserved for women during the early stages of pregnancy, his joints

1. Brignoni, 1995.

are protected from injury. As the paint seals the soul to the protruding limbs of the figure, his vision is complete. At sunrise on the first morning after the spectacular revelation and release of the soul as image of *malagan*, he guides the procession of mourners to the beach were he instructs them to bathe and wash off the remains of the soul. The "spirit canoe" has left for the island of the dead once again, leaving the memory of *malagan* in its place.

Death and memory

II.8

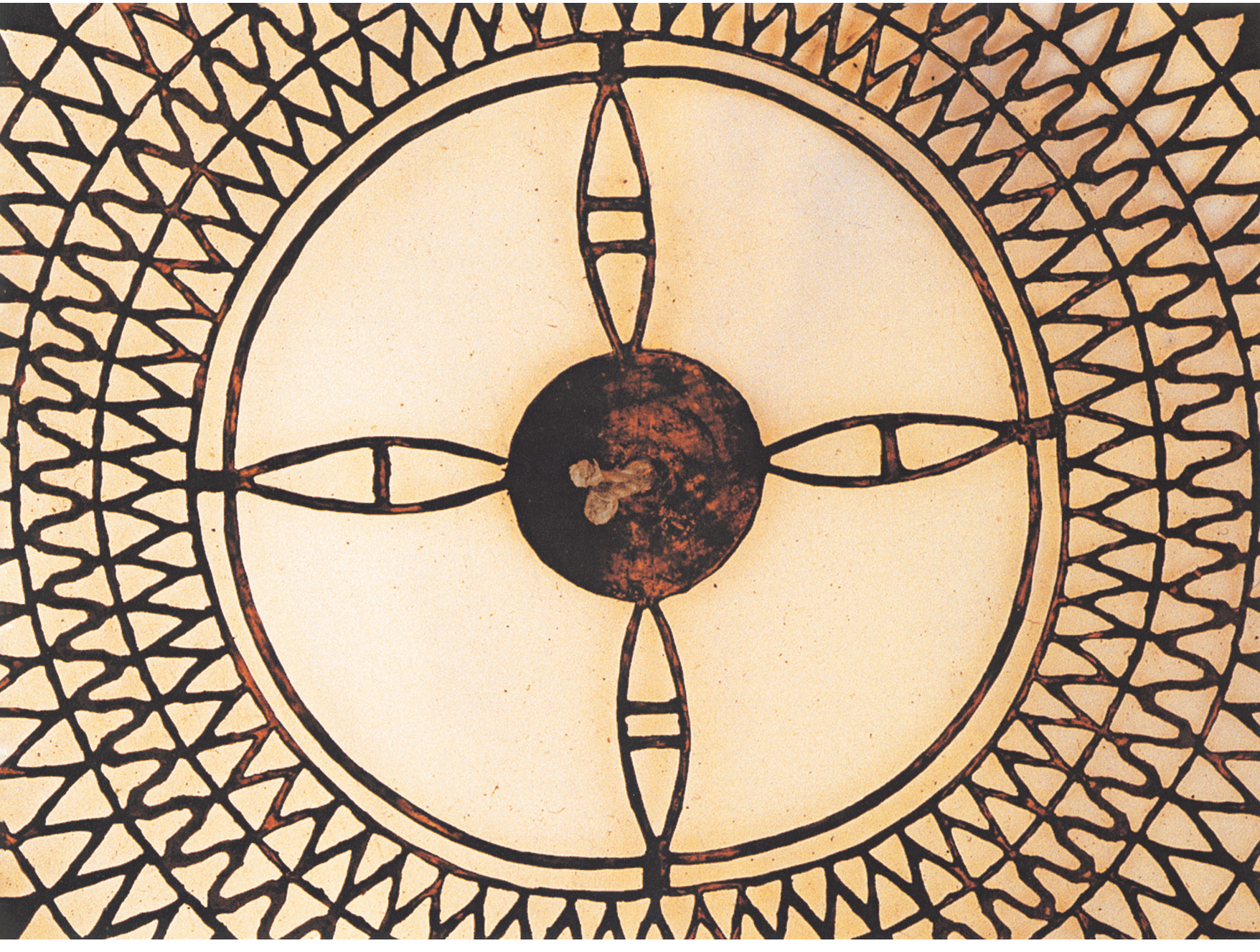
Susanne Küchler

Like the work of mourning, death in the Kara region of northern New Ireland is not believed to be instantaneous, nor is it seen to happen "naturally." All death is thought to be caused by action, of spirit, other, or self; even the death of the elder housed already inside the funerary enclosure and surviving on a liquid diet is not different in kind, but tells us of a notion in which death is the result of the removal of skin which allows life-force to depart from its earthly trappings. Spirits dwelling in mangrove trees in the forest are feared for their skin-snatching ability, appearing in human guise in sleep to trick and trap the life-force of the living which cannot return to its home upon awakening. Loss of skin can also be caused by jealousy or anger in social relations that are associated through labor, land, and loyalty with the condition of the body. Once a death has occurred in the village, the fire in the house of the deceased is extinguished and the body taken to the hut on the resting ground around which a wooden or bamboo enclosure is erected.

Depending on seniority and status, funerals are huge affairs, eclipsed only by the staging of the secondary funeral years later. The central work of the funeral is the payment of groups who volunteer special services, such as the grave digging and the watching over the dead, but also includes the offering of pigs by female descendants to secure land for the subsequent generation. Most important is a symbolic fight over the body of the deceased, which grants those who win the right to plan the proceedings of *malagan* and to count the soul of the deceased as their future ancestor. The most senior dead are honored with the first performance of *malagan* already at the burial as mourners dance (*buma*) with the coffin from the resting place to the burial ground, accompanied by women chanting songs of *malagan*.

The work of mourning in New Ireland builds up chains of memory that have the deceptive appearance of duration. There are several named stages to mourning, each named after the stages of building up a fire—from cold ashes to glowing heat, finally reached at *malagan*. Marked initially by the ripening of the deceased's produce in the gardens and on trees, consumed by the family on the fenced resting place, two major stages, marking the "burning of the house" and the end of mourning, direct attention away from the familial relations tied to the deceased person, to the extended relations of kinship which have connected the dead person's clan to other clans in living memory. The end of mourning is marked with the setting of a gravestone, shifting attention from resting to burial ground. Years may pass until the death of an elder sparks off the planning of a secondary burial, the *malagan*, for all the "unfinished" dead buried in the cemetery. Focused on the double funerary enclosure of burial and feasting ground, death thus initiates gatherings of increasing scale and anonymity, planning for which becomes the sole concern of those who addressed the deceased with a relational term. Although nothing is left that may remind people of the dead after the major intercession marking the end of mourning, life can only return to the village when the souls of the dead are finally sent to the island of the dead with the staging of *malagan*.

In Melanesia, as exemplified by *malagan*, the commemorative work for the dead thus feeds on a memory of which amnesia is the necessary and paradoxical complement. The process of remembering that is incised in the work of mourning is at the same time a systematic forgetting of the dead, a process of un-stitching the tightly woven relations of which the deceased person was so much a part. In New Ireland, one must know how to forget in order to know how to remember. The work for the dead, then, is a work that creates ancestors, and in so doing, establishes a memory. Yet this memory is not filled with things, but with images that are seen as resources from which to re-envision the present over and over again. It is a memory that remembers much forgetting, and that recalls and represents only the better to forget.



pl. 17 (detail, see p. 57)

Malagan ceremonies in the north of New Ireland

Philippe Peltier

In a text published in 1926, the critic and writer Carl Einstein talked of the complexity of *malagan* sculptures. "Looking at some figures we are struck by the fact that the body is transformed into an ornamental bony frame [...] it may be that this ornamental frame represents the skeleton of the ancestors."[1] He then tentatively interprets the accumulation of shapes as the epic struggle with the demons as it is recounted in the fables and myths. This interpretation was certainly inspired by a book about *malagan* arts[2] published by Krämer in 1925. It is very much in the spirit of its time. The association of death with ritual and sacrifice against a background of the original myth haunts much of the writing of Georges Bataille, to whom Einstein is close; and when Giacometti executed *La Cage* in which an exploded female body is pinned between bars,[3] he transcribed into a contemporary, Western form, the same funeral, exhilarating idea of sacrifice.

Remarkable as it is, Carl Einstein's interpretation of *malagan* arts is too narrow. It relies solely on form. These days, there is no question of restricting the aesthetics of *malagan* arts to sculpture alone. Sculptures are certainly a central element in the ceremonies. And they are certainly eye-catching. But the participants' attention is usually focused elsewhere.

A *malagan* ceremony is an opera, a total art-work in which the actions are interconnected together, answering, crossing over and complementing one another. Just like the music, songs, gestures, or dancing, the *malagan* sculptures are part of an overall aesthetic experience. The ceremony is an open, polysemic work which cannot be reduced to a single interpretation. The *malagan* objects are destroyed at the end of the cycle and disappear from the spectators' sight just as the stories and songs die away and the dances and gestures vanish. This already complex process is further complicated by many regional variations and transformations over time. Some forms are no longer displayed—which does not mean that they have disappeared, they are merely in abeyance—others have

1. Einstein 1926: 5: "Bei einigen dieser Figuren mag überraschen, dass der Körper als ornamentales Gestänge geschnitzt ist. [...] Vielleicht, dass dieses ornamentale Gestänge das Skelett des Ahnen andeuten soll."

2. Krämer 1925.

3. There is an enormous body of literature on this subject. See in particular the work of Rosalind Krauss, including an article on Alberto Giacometti, in William Rubin (ed.), *Primitivism in 20th Century Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1984: 516-518.

gradually become obsolete under external pressure or with the effects of colonization. But going beyond these variants, there is a common aesthetic which dramatizes the passage between the world of the shades and the world of the living.

"Finishing the dead"

The death of a member of the community marks the beginning of a long cycle of exchanges which culminates, some years later, in the exhibition of *malagan* objects during a grand ceremony which brings the period of mourning to a close. This ultimate exhibition is designed, according to a common expression in New Ireland, to "finish the dead man," to efface him from the world of the living by sending his soul into the spirit world. But it is not merely a farewell. It is a matter of controlling the "soul" or rather the "vital force" of the dead man in order to pass it on to the next generation. This vital force allows the clans to live and reproduce themselves from generation to generation. "Finishing the dead man" means picking up his energy, channeling it and sharing it out among the members of the clan. The aim is to tighten social bonds between the man or men who take the place of the dead man and the rest of the community.

To explain this complex process, the people of the Tabar Islands use the image of a large tree which has fallen in a garden. The men organize the planting around the fallen trunk. Little by little, the garden grows again; new plants develop in the area once shaded by the majestic tree. The Kara, a language group on the northwest coast of the large island, use the metaphor of fire. For them the *malagan* ceremonies are like a hearth which gives off more heat when the flames die down to embers. Whatever image is used, the *malagan* ceremonies resolve the crisis. The death of a member of the community throws the society of the living off balance. It is essential to control the wandering spirits, to channel free-ranging forces which may upset the society and to redistribute them.

Accumulation and permutation

The "images"[4] play a decisive role in this redistribution process. They act as mediators between the worlds. Erected under leafy shelters which may attain a great height, they draw all eyes and dominate the surrounding area. They watch over the ceremony.

Depending on the region and language group, the word *malagan* can be translated as "be like,"[5] "make an image,"[6] or "look like."[7] *Malagan* sculptures are substitutes, images which are displayed in the place of the dead man. Yet they are not of the order of a representation or a portrait. In this sense they do not portray the dead man. They are accumulations of motifs on structures, obeying complex rules. For example, the *eikuar* (see pl. 80, 81, 83, 84): a vertical post on which stacked figures are surrounded by animals which are always there although their appearance and arrangement changes. *Malagan* sculptures give the impression of an infinite variation on the same theme, like a piece of music in which the black and white notes liven up a basic melody. Each clan has its own carved motifs, whether they are human figures, figures taken from the animal or vegetable kingdoms, or more abstract images such as "eyes of fire." The rules governing the contiguity of the elements seem to override those ensuring the continuity of the sculpture.

4. By "image" here we mean all the forms that *malagan* objects can take: painted panels, basketry discs, masks, constructions, and often ephemeral assemblages.

5. Küchler 2002: 114.

6. Brouwer 1980: 161. This author points out that since the introduction of European learning, the term *malagan* also means "writing."

7. Gunn n.d.: 143.

Fig. 10
Malagan ceremony. Banesa village, Big Tabar, July 2001.
Photo taken by Philippe Peltier.

Even if the researchers who have worked in the language areas where the *malagan* are found do not always agree on the interpretation to be given to the ceremonies and sculptures, it is understood that each clan owns, by inheritance through the maternal line according to a system of exclusive rights, a set of animal and human figures arranged on a structure which Brigitte Derlon calls "models" or "types."[8] Within a "tradition" or "type," *malagan* sculptures form a "chain." On the Tabar Islands in particular, each member of the clan owns, during his lifetime, one or several links in this chain. They may be as different as a mask or a particular kind of sculpture. The links in this chain are associated with a song which refers to events in the clan's founding myth. So a *malagan* object is linked to history and time. Displaying a sculpture or a set of *malagan* sculptures means telling the history of its group and for the person who receives it as his share of the inheritance, it means fitting into an ancestral lineage and inheriting its vital force and the right to use it. It is obvious that each sculpture must be right, that is, it must harmonize with the narratives and the tradition of each clan. Unless you want to forcibly take over the prerogatives of another clan, you cannot use forms and motifs which do not belong to your own clan.

Nonetheless, as a result of scissions and displacements of clan groups, and the exportation of motifs between Tabar and the north of New Ireland, the way the motifs are arranged on a structure and sometimes the structures themselves have changed. The *malagan* are nonetheless still related to one another. Apart from unbelievable variations (the collections in Western museums show that it is impossible to find two identical objects, despite their family air), each object depends on a "source *malagan*" or "canon."[9] These source images are memorized. They are phantom images which show through the current images. No one would dream of representing the "source" images. Only the variations are visible.

So all *malagan* sculptures are made from "canons" or structures to which figures are added in an arrangement which is open to all forms of change. Nonetheless, in order to be effective, aesthetics require each construction to obey rules dictated by the history of each group. These rules are rather like poetics, if we understand by this term the beauty of a demonstration as in mathematics. Mathematics based on a knowledgeable accumulation of sculpted and painted motifs. The aesthetic experience nonetheless takes different forms: it is at once emotional—when it involves the shock of revelation during a ceremony and is therefore associated with death—and intellectual when it focuses on logic and the narration of history.

During the ceremony each object is memorized by the spectators. Once the task has been accomplished, once the vital force in their intricate forms has been passed on to

8. Derlon 1997: 63 *et sqq.*

9. On the notion of canon in Melanesian art, see the study by Christian Kaufmann in Kaeppler, Kaufmann and Newton 1993, especially pp. 278-279 and 309-317.

the next generation, these objects, whether they are carved or made of basketry, lose their importance. They are empty. They can be destroyed or sold. Melanesians do not clutter their lives with objects. The important thing is remembering the images that they own. Memorization implies understanding, assimilating, and therefore controlling the canons and their variants. It supposes an intellectual construction, an analysis of the system which permits variations.[10] In Melanesia, each sculpture is a theater of memory.

Time

A *malagan* ceremony is preceded by many exchanges which are often an opportunity for erecting ephemeral structures or using masks. For many weeks, not only are sculptures made by a recognized artist, but a garden is dug and pigs are fattened in preparation for the trading and distribution of food which will take place during the ceremony.

At last the great day arrives. Or rather the great days, for a *malagan* ceremony is not a hasty affair. Listing the high points of a *malagan* ceremony is a real challenge: not only does the pattern vary from one region to another, but it involves all the senses. It has quiet moments and lively moments, the action may be concentrated in a few essential, fleeting gestures or dilated over a sustained period. A *malagan* ceremony is much more than a display of sculptures or objects. Gestures, words, and songs are all part of the meaning.

The display of *malagan* objects is one of fixed images. The sculptures are installed in a structure made of foliage built near the graves. This construction is cleverly arranged to achieve maximum visual impact. The sculptures are exhibited against a background of alternating matt and glossy leaves, splashes of color from fruit attached to the uprights, feathers which tremble at the least puff of wind, rays of light flickering over the leaves. The sculptures themselves are arranged according to a symmetrical design so strict that the iconography of some *malagan* objects may be changed to achieve a perfect balance. The beauty of the display is matched by that of the songs and music. Strange sounds like those made by friction drums resonate and give the impression of a supernatural presence, heightened by the fact that the musicians are often out of sight of the audience.

Exchanges are one of the intense times. Payment in pigs is needed to transfer the rights over the *malagan* from one generation to another. Buying a *malagan*, people say, means owning the "bones of the pig." Whoever owns the bones of the pig owns the rights over a *malagan*. The pigs are brought into the enclosure. They are choked to death and then their carcasses are exposed in the midst of garden produce (taro, sweet potatoes, edible leaves, plantain bananas, etc.) spread out in an orderly, majestic carpet in front of the display of sculptures. The vertical order of the sculptures is counterbalanced by the horizontal order of the natural produce. The ceremony transforms the objects, whether natural or man-made, into a thing of beauty.

Until the payment is made, the ceremony takes place out of sight. A high foliage fence hides the display of sculptures from all those, mainly the women and children, who are not entitled to enter the enclosure. The sudden dismantling of the fence is an intense moment in the ceremonial cycle. It is a theatrical act which triggers catharsis. The expression of an intangible, supernatural world, essential for the survival of the society, is suddenly visible. What was previously private, reserved for the men, is projected into the

10. This faculty of memorizing, and everything it implies about the relationship to knowledge and to possession, sparked a major debate in Pacific ethnology. See the work of Harrison, including Harrison 1995, and Wagner 1986.

public space. The women are then allowed to enter the enclosure. They come to pay for the *malagan* and lay shell money at the foot of the display. When they see the *malagan* some burst into tears.[11] Others stay solemn. Beauty is a subjective experience which is tinged with the whole range of emotions. It is a personal matter and depends largely on the individual's place in society. A feeling of beauty arises from the assembled sculptures just as it arises from their sudden apparition. But this beauty is not naked. It is the manifestation of a presence, of the world of the ancestors, the founders of the order of the world and the laws which govern it.

Fig. 11
Group of dancers from Koko village, east coast Big Tabar Island, performing an ancestral dance called *sua kopilo* outside the *malagan* enclosure at Banesa village, Tabar Islands, 2001. *Sua kopilo* refers to a group of beings that live in the forest. *Photo taken by Michael Gunn.*

The spatial dimension

The relationship between the earth and the *malagan* is a complex problem and many questions are still unanswered. Each *malagan* ritual is related to an enclosure which belongs to a clan. Even if the clan moves away or the village is rebuilt somewhere else the enclosure remains visible. It does not move. The stone or bamboo fence continues to show where it is. All these enclosures make up a geographical pattern. Dots scattered in space, a space in space, leaving a deep mark in the territory. They record the movements of the clans. As often in Melanesia, where genealogical depth is not accorded much importance (it seldom goes beyond five generations and, after that, names and people are forgotten), the founding places, places of origin, are the best proof of property rights.[12] In an interview, the sculptor Edward Salle used the word *"stampa"* with reference to these enclosures. It is a Tok Pisin word that can be translated as "seal," "stock," or "root." Applied to the world of ancestors, it means the points in the landscape where the founding spirits of the clans emerged. They are therefore lines of force. In a space that is periodically reorganized, the *malagan* rituals may be transferred to a new enclosure, the important thing being that they take root there, that is, that they are founded on a cemetery. Melanesian space is the antithesis of ours. It is not conceived as an absolute, abstract position, but as a place charged with history and memory. Each man, according to his clan affiliation, is attached to a set of enclosures. The *malagan* ceremonies are the time when a man's affiliation with an enclosure is reasserted, when his person acquires a new dimension. And this is perhaps one of the keys to the aesthetics of New Ireland: these enclosed spaces play a considerable role. They are essential to the constitution of the individual—young initiates spent many months in the *malagan* enclosures—just as they are one of the conditions for the apparition of the *malagan*. In times of transition—the rituals—they are fixed, absolute spatial references. In the end, the enclosures transform man's necessarily transitory action into something durable.

11. Derlon 1997: 221.

12. This system of relationship to the land, of anchorage in the clan territory, has been described in other regions of Melanesia. On this subject, see Bonnemaison 1996: 167-178.

Performative aesthetics in southern New Ireland

◂ III.2

Antje Denner

One of New Ireland's hallmarks is the large number of dances and public performances, which, traditionally, were staged in the context of rituals used during the mortuary or commemorative sequences. Today they are very often shown during festivities organized by state institutions or the church. On the basis of a dance and a mask performance I witnessed in November 2001 in the village of Balngit on Babase Island (Anir), I follow up the question of what it means for New Irelanders to participate in a performance, either as an active participant or as a passive spectator. This approach not only addresses the issues of art perception and viewing practices but also implies questions concerning the quality and the form and conditions of aesthetic perception and evaluation, and explores the criteria by which dances and similar public performances are assessed and judged. To discuss this is one of the aims of this contribution, the other is to make the exhibition audience more aware of the difference between viewing things under gallery conditions and the real-life context in a New Ireland village.[1]

But let me first say something regarding the circumstances of the two performances I am about to describe. They were staged during a commemorative feast organized by a man called James Tengnaof in honor of his deceased elder brother and men's house leader Theodor Nandaou and marked the succession of Tengnaof to leadership of the men's house community of Silalangit.[2] The performance of the two *sangsangmat* masks, which I describe to begin with, was organized by members of Tengnaof's and Nandaou's lineage in recognition of the deceased's membership in the secret society responsible for producing the masks, but also simply because, in his time, "Nandaou had preferred mask appearances to other dances."[3] Following the *sangsangmat*, there was a dance performed by a group from another village. For this contribution the leader of the dance group was presented with a pig later in the feast.[4]

The *sangsangmat* performance began with the entry of a group of about 15 men onto the large dancing ground in front of the men's house, where a crowd of a few hundred people was waiting. The men approached the area from the surrounding bush, moving in a measured step and chanting a slow song in a low voice. They had decorated their bodies with various kinds of leaf and their faces were covered with a greenish, paste-like substance. The men kept singing the song to the accompaniment of small percussion instruments for about fifteen minutes, only then did the two masked figures make their appearance. One of the masks was male, the other female, the latter recognizable by her "body" which displayed a pair of heavy breasts hanging down to her loins.

The black-painted head-masks were conical in shape, topped with feathers and had red and white mouths made of pig jaws, and tube-shaped, red eyes with white pupils. The bottom rim of the head-masks consisted of lucent green leaves, which hung down over the figures' shoulders. Over the tips of their fingers they wore pointed, thin, white bamboo tubes made to look like long, sharp claws. The figures first circled the men's house and then took up position in front of the orchestra and the chorus. With the change of rhythm in the song, the two masks began their dance. It consisted of a set

1. I should like to thank my colleagues Claus Volkenandt and Christian Kaufmann for reading the manuscript and for their valuable comments and suggestions.

2. During the feast, a number of other dances were also performed, some of them during the night preceding the main event, some of them on the same day.

3. Statement by one of the participants during a discussion following the *sangsangmat* performance.

4. Usually the future recipient of a pig is notified well in advance of the feast in order to give him and his people the chance to prepare a dance for the occasion as a sign of appreciation. The dance performance is a moral, not a binding obligation.

Fig. 12
Performance of a *tambaran* dance during a mortuary ceremony. Balngit village, Babase Island, Anir, 2001. *Photo taken by Antje Denner.*

of sequences in step with the music, which became increasingly faster and louder. The two *sangsangmat* carried out their characteristic dance steps and leaps, moving to and fro before the orchestra, going through backward, forward, and rotating movements. At times they danced side by side, then switched over to facing each other. The orchestra not only provided the musical accompaniment, it actually appeared to be conducting the two figures. At the end of each sequence, the singing stopped and only the drumbeats continued, signaling the moment for the two maskers to stage mock attacks against the audience, frightening the people with menacing gestures.

The second performance was a dance called *tambaran* and was performed by four young men, again accompanied by an ensemble and choir. They were dressed in leaf skirts and wore around their necks ruffs made of the same material. On their heads they carried helmet-like headdresses made of fern and leaf fringes, which included a small, red, lancet-shaped board with feathers, and a rim made of yellow fiber material. Their forearms and calves were painted white and orange and in their hands they held leaf bundles. Like the headdresses, these consisted of fragrant leaves, just as the decoration of the singers during the *sangsangmat* performance. *Tambaran* dances consist of several parts, which in turn are divided into shorter sequences. The dance goes through a variety of alternating hand and arm movements, formations and steps, some of them executed in a crouching position. The dancers also perform full or half spins, encircle each other, and go through sequences where they mimic commonplace behavior and everyday events, such as hunting birds with bows and arrows or slingshots, or fishing on the reef with nets.

This brief description allows us to draw a number of initial conclusions. Firstly, it is worth noting that the performances include a combination of different elements that are stimulating to the audiovisual, olfactory, and kinetic senses, thereby rendering the experience of co- and inter-action of the senses to all the participants involved—the dancers, the singers, and the audience.[5] A second significant point is that the actors create the piece they are performing with their own bodies. This means that dance performances are situated in a contradictory context and in a tension field between the conflicting poles of being a body and having a body: every dancer *has* a body which he uses and manipulates as a medium to represent a figure and to mediate meaning. At the same time, however, the dancer *is* a body that is irresolvably and existentially tied up with the performance in its quality as a multimedia act, which, for its part, is dependent on the performer, his individual corporality, his physical body, and his movements. Moreover, it is the dancers' corporality that creates the performance, while the members of the orchestra and chorus give the dance its voice and sound.[6] A dance or a mask performance only comes into being through its enactment. This is what constitutes its performative quality.[7]

5. Sensual perception and aesthetic impact are central themes of a number of Western installation artists such as Olafur Eliasson, see Lehmann 2004.

6. Many contemporary theater theories address this tension field, see for example Fischer-Lichte 2004.

7. Hetzel 2004 offers a good and detailed review of works on performance and performativity. One could also make a link to several ritual theory approaches that show that ritual acts have an engendering dimension, see e.g. Rappaport 1999: 107-138.

However, aesthetic experience is also dependent on, and shaped by, conditions that lie beyond the work itself. These include various forms of knowledge, for example, knowing the contents and meanings of a specific dance and the regalia that it employs, or understanding dance in general and as a genre. Further, they include the experience of past and similar events and current attitudes and expectations, while individual and culturally defined viewing practices and meaning patterns also play an important part. In order to say more on the contextuality of performances and its implications let us return to the two events described above.

When discussing the question of what the actors and spectators of the *sangsangmat* perceived during the performance, how they experienced it, what associations it elicited and what conclusions they drew from the experience, it is important to know that the masks are produced by members of a male secret society in a location hidden away in the bush, which is taboo for women and other non-initiated persons. The actual manufacture is in the hands of experienced and long-standing members of the society. The completion of a mask calls for a ritual act that is performed by the leader and through which the mask is animated. Only then, and against payment of a small fee, are the new initiates brought in and shown the masks. In the days and weeks to follow they take part in the meetings during which the songs and the dance are practiced, and occasionally they too are permitted to slip into the mask. They are instructed on the society's rules and codes of conduct and learn something about the nature and power of the *sangsangmat*. The precise method of manufacturing the masks is something they learn only very much later, usually on the occasion of the next initiation, which could be many years after. Nor are they told anything about the deeper contents of the secret society or about special kinds of esoteric knowledge. This is imparted bit by bit, and only to a selected few. The ritual act of animating the mask is passed on exclusively from one ritual leader to the next.

This means that the members of a secret society do not necessarily share the same level of knowledge and do not see matters from the same viewpoint, and consequently they will experience and appreciate the public mask performance differently. However, these are only differences by grade, the real dividing line is between initiates and non-initiates and, more generally, between men and women. The members of the secret society know how the masks are constructed, and in the weeks and days before the performance they have had ample time to inspect them and become accustomed to their specific features. They know who the maskers are and they are familiar with the song texts. They are also very much aware of what sort of spiritual beings the *sangsangmat* are and what kind of power emanates from them. Moreover, they appreciate that the masks are effigies that bear little resemblance to the physical appearance of real *sangsangmat* spirits.[8] A man who is not a member of *sangsangmat*, but possibly belongs a similar secret society such as *tubuan* or *tomalanggen*, will probably watch and appreciate the performance in the same manner as the members of *sangsangmat*. But for women and non-initiates it is different. They are told that the masks are materialized spirits from the beyond, and since they are barred access to the secluded areas in the bush they have neither insider-knowledge nor are they aware of what goes on in the society's secret assemblies and are thus left in uncertainty. But even if they doubt that the masks are real spirit beings, they

8. In other words, *sangsangmat* spirits are given a presence through the masks without actually being individually represented. This seemingly paradox formulation runs contrary to classical European, linear patterns of representation.

Fig. 13
A *sangsangmat* masker approaches the dance square. Balngit village, Babase Island, Anir, 2001.
Photo taken by Antje Denner.

will still view and appreciate them very differently from the insiders. All the more so, since women are instructed never to approach the masks too closely and not to stare at the masks for too long but only to throw brief glances, otherwise the power of the masks might harm them. Not surprisingly, the majority of women spectators did stay well to the back of the audience during the *sangsangmat* performance described above.

Shortly before a secret society makes its entry onto the public dancing ground one often sees ensorcelled lime powder being distributed, which members of the society have prepared as a protective measure in advance. It is daubed on the women's temples, close to the corner of the eye. The fact that it is applied to that spot is certainly no mere coincidence, since in southern New Ireland—as in many other Melanesian societies—the sense of seeing is granted special significance. True knowledge and real insight, it is said, are only gained through seeing things with one's own eyes. This clearly underlines that art-works—in our case masks—are assigned an innate efficacy and that perception and aesthetic experience are endowed with an epistemological quality.

Unlike the *sangsangmat* performance, the *tambaran* is rated as a "normal" dance and not associated with any special kind of spiritual power.[9] The actors are not subject to any strict taboos during the preparatory phase and neither the run-up nor the actual performance are regarded as dangerous in the sense that misconduct or the violation of rules are believed to cause illness. The dance ornaments and the dance itself are prepared in secrecy but this is primarily done in order to create a surprise effect and to guarantee that the dance has an impact on the audience. The atmosphere during the *tambaran* dance was completely different to that of the *sangsangmat* performance, it was easygoing and cheerful. Not only did the mimicry of everyday behavior amuse the spectators, what also caused fits of laughter was the way the dance group suddenly switched to a marching step when leaving the ground at the end of the performance. Two women stepped from the audience and began dancing toward the oncoming group, imitating the dancers' marching step and their arm and body movements. Shortly before reaching them, the two women turned and ran off screaming amid the roaring laughter of the audience. Occasions like this where, much to the crowd's amusement, people from the audience mingle with the dancers and join in the dance, or—especially in the case of elderly women—make lewd gestures, are quite common and acceptable, as long as the performance is classed as a harmless and entertaining event.

What has been said up to now shows the clear distinction that is made between mask appearances and performances by secret societies on the one hand and more profane, innocuous acts on the other. This is certainly the case but one has to go a step further and also consider what functions the performances fulfill, what relevance they have in terms of social action and, within this context, what creative and formative opportunities they offer. Looking at it from this angle, the difference between the two

9. On the New Ireland mainland *ta(m)baran* is also the name of a secret society. This society exists on Anir as well but here it is called *kenit* and has only very little to do with the dance called *tambaran*.

types is put into perspective. Both forms of public performance involve the issue of status and prestige. A successful performance enhances the reputation of the man who commissioned the act and boosts his status as community "big man." Furthermore, the actual performances provide a platform for the presenting groups and their leaders where they compete for prestige by staging dances that should come over as powerful, impressive, and as captivating as possible. Every performance—regardless of whether it is a "normal" dance or the presentation by a secret society—is practiced intensively beforehand and backed up by a variety of magical props. This is absolutely necessary, since success, or failure, is judged exclusively by the actual enactment on the appointed day. Some of these magical provisions are applied to the masks themselves, to the decorations, and to the paraphernalia used during the performance, with the aim of making them strong, bright, and shiny, or, in other words: making them indestructible; other forms of magic are used on the singers in order to make their voices loud and strong and to ensure that they make no mistakes and that the choir sings in harmony. With regard to the dancers, the magic should make their limbs flexible and their bodies agile and near to weightless, allowing them to move graciously and to dance in step.[10] A Western viewer would probably spontaneously associate many of these criteria with the concept of beauty. For New Irelanders, however, they refer to the strength or power of a performance. This power is associated with the spiritual and numinous and is reflected in qualities such as brilliance, colorfulness, and luminosity. Where the masks and performances of secret societies are concerned, one could speak of an "aesthetics of awe and reverence."[11] In the case of the *sangsangmat*, for example, it is created and reflected by the contrast between the black ground coat of the masks, and the red, tube eyes, and the gaping mouth, which, together with the maskers' "leaf body" and the threatening gestures the figures make, signalize that the *sangsangmat* are inspirited with a mysterious power. A few days after the feast, two women remarked that the masks (and the singing that went with the performance) were at best "terrifyingly beautiful," which is exactly the impression that the men of the secret society intended to create. According to one member, the spectators should realize that the *sangsangmat* "not only offer an entertaining show, no, they have power and this is what the spectators are meant to feel and learn to fear."

When assessing or evaluating dances and similar public performances, other factors or, better, aesthetic qualities and valuations must also be taken into consideration, such as musical composition and choreography, especially its complexity and its correct rendition. The choreography should be sophisticated and coherent but, at the same time, give room for variation. As one man commented: "When a group goes through the same movements and sequences all the time it gets boring; the eyes of the onlookers get tired and feel heavy, and they will turn their attention away." Variability and innovation are not only given leeway, creativity as such is highly valued. Performances build on preexisting patterns while simultaneously creating new variants. The different performances represent distinct types that are defined by conventions and distinguished by certain characteristics such as special kinds of body decoration and ornaments, or certain melodies and rhythms. Within this framework—the canon as it were—variation is not only possible, but actually expected and highly appreciated.[12] A performance

10. Jeudy-Balini 1999 and 2001 mentions similar criteria for the Sulka of New Britain.

11. In a similar fashion, Gerbrands 1994 refers to a mask type of the Kilenge of New Britain as the "awe-inspiring *Nausang*."

12. One could even say that variation is a prerequisite of the canon.

Fig. 14
Male (left) and female (right) *sangsangmat* figures during their performance. Balngit village, Babase Island, Anir, 2001.
Photo taken by Antje Denner.

is looked upon as being correct—that also means "good"—if it is enacted within the limits of the forms of expression that are associated with the specific type in question and thus conforms to the expectations of the more knowledgeable members of the audience.

A further criterion people apply to judge the standard of a performance is appropriateness. In other words, a performance should befit the deceased person in honor of whom the ceremony as such is being held. To warrant this, one either chooses a dance the person used to perform himself (or herself) or which he liked especially, or the composer creates a song that contains references to the character of the deceased person, or to certain events in his life. Ultimately, the reaction of the audience is the gauge of success. If the spectators throng around the performers enthusiastically and follow the dance spellbound it is a sure sign that the power of the performance has seized them. This kind of admiration, or even rapture, relates to the total performance of the ensemble, i.e. the co-action of the drumming, the singing, the choreography, the body movements, as well as the masks, the body decorations, and the fragrances rising from the perfumed participants.[13]

The dances and mask performances of southern New Ireland are comparable to art-works that are composed of various media. They consist of different forms of artistic expression but only come into being when enacted in the interplay of their constituent elements. Even when the performance is repeated, the re-enactment is never the same, there is always something new and unique to it. Performative acts are so vibrant because they live off, and thrive on, movement. Unlike visitors to an exhibition, the spectators do not face static objects but follow movements. They are watching a dance, while enshrouded in a cloud of scents and exposed to the crescendo and decrescendo of the singing and drumming. The images that catch their eyes vary, merge or are superimposed in ever-changing shades of light. If they move to a different spot they see things from a different angle and in a new light, altering their perception of the performance. The total momentum, that is the ensemble interacting as a whole, is the key, not an isolated moment frozen in time and space, such as a single mask, sound, movement, or dance ornament. A spectator may concentrate on one aspect for a moment and then switch to another but it is always within the resonating pull of the performance as a whole. For a moment an onlooker might take the stance of a critical viewer only to be caught up again and drawn into the spectacle in the next instant. What a person actually perceives during such an event, what he (or she) understands about it, and what is possibly new to him, very much depends on the individual himself, his personality, his life history, his attitude and his personal situation at present. At the same time, aesthetic experience is impacted by culturally defined conventions, viewing practices, and patterns of meaning.

13. Powerfulness, correctness, as well as admiration, or even rapture are criteria of aesthetic evaluation that are not restricted to New Ireland, as studies by Nachman 1981 (for Nissan), Stewart 1989 (for the Lolo of New Britain) and Morphy 1992 (for the Yolngu in Arnhem Land, Australia) go to show.

Art and Ritual

Southern and Central New Ireland

pl. 26 (detail, see p. 103)

Bush and coastal people

Michael Gunn

A common distinction in New Ireland is made between the saltwater people living on the coast and the bush people who own land up in the mountains. Today, most people live on the coast with only a few people living in the inland regions of New Hanover and on the Lelet Plateau. However, until the Australian colonial period, which started in 1914, the inland regions were quite well populated.

In some places, such as the offshore islands of Tabar and Lihir, and the narrow part of northern New Ireland, there was no status difference between the bush people and the saltwater people. They spoke the same language, intermarried, and were dependent upon each other for economic purposes.

In the northern part of New Ireland live a group of people who speak Kuot—the only non-Austronesian language in all of New Ireland. Although they occupy a region that ranges from east coast to west coast, their identity tends to be more bush in orientation. For example, many Kuot speakers have a pig or a python as their *masalai* (the life-force that links a clan to the land it owns), and throughout New Ireland a pig or python *masalai* indicates a bush origin. However, it should also be noted that Kuot people living on the west coast have in common with their Madak neighbors to the south a strong shark-hunting tradition. Their *malagan* traditions are said to have been derived from those of the Notsi, who live in villages interspersed among Kuot villages on the east coast. The Notsi have strong marriage ties with the people on Tabar to the east and with the Kuot who live nearby and inland. *Malagan* traditions followed marriage from Tabar to Notsi and from Notsi to Kuot.

Where New Ireland is wide, such as in the region around the Lelet Plateau in the north and south of the isthmus of central New Ireland, the bush people tended to avoid interaction with the saltwater people and maintained a separate lifestyle. North of the Lelet Plateau the bush people used *uli* figures to honor their dead, a unique practice that eventually spread to the coast through marriage networks. These bush people spoke a dialect of the Madak language that is used in this region.[1]

1. Krämer 1925, Bühler 1931, Peekel 1935, and people I spoke to on the Lelet Plateau in 2003 all indicated that the primary area where *uli* were used was in the mountainous region northwest of the Lelet Plateau.

◂ **Fig. 15**
Women beside a house on the Lelet Plateau, northern New Ireland, 1909.
Photograph by Augustin Krämer of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition 1907–1909.

▸ **pl. 24**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 13016
Bark-cloth mask with seedcase eyes; the distinctive "widow's peak" hairline is found on masks made on the east coast of southern New Ireland.
Southern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Schmiele, 1896.
Bark-cloth, rattan, bast, seedcases, wood, fiber.
H: 31; W: 32; D: 40 cm.

Further south, where the island is wider still, several groups of people lived inland and spoke languages different from those on the coast. It should be noted that all these languages belonged to the Austronesian family, probably indicating a long period of separation from a common ancestral group. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries a series of hostile relationships existed between the bush and coastal people on both sides of southern New Ireland. Unfortunately very little was recorded about the bush people until the members of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition visited a few villages inland from Muliama on the southeast coast.[2]

A number of different names have been recorded for the bush people of the south. Not too far south of the present-day town of Namatanai is an interior region that was quite heavily populated in the late 19th century by a people who today refer to themselves as Pitpittoka. Nowadays their descendants live on both coasts among the people in the Patpatar and Sursurunga regions. In the Patpatar area on the west coast the people today distinguish between Hinsal coastal people and Pitpittoka people of bush ancestry. In 2001 and 2003 we found Pitpittoka people associated with at least 14 villages. The inland region near Punam—the place most often associated with the carved stone *kulap* figures—was apparently quite heavily populated according to Punam people whom we spoke with in 2001, but it is not clear whether these people were Pitpittoka or another group.

On the east coast we met Pitpittoka people who spoke of one of their masking traditions called *tilok*, which was used to honor the deceased. Berlin VI 13016 (pl. 24) was identified by a Pitpittoka man as similar to the *tilok* masks that they had previously used. Other masks identified as a *tilok* by several Pitpittoka people were elsewhere identified by a number of people in northern New Ireland as those used in *kipang*.[3]

To the south of the Pitpittoka lived the Butam people, who were also known as Laget. They have been recorded from both sides of southern New Ireland, between the Sursurunga- and Konomala-speaking peoples on the east coast and between the Sursurunga and Kandas peoples of the west coast. At present it is not known if they inhabited the mountainous valleys of the true interior, or whether they kept to the mountainous regions inland of each coast.

2. The following authors mention New Ireland's bush people: Powell 1883; Parkinson 1907; Brown 1908; Sapper & Friederici 1908; Friederici 1908; Schlaginhaufen 1908, 1964, 1968; Stephan & Graebner 1907; Krämer 1925; Krämer-Bannow 1916; Neuhaus 1962; Peekel 1909; Capell 1967; Biskup 1974; Ross 1988; Kingston 1998.

3. Another mask also identified as *tilok* by the Pitpittoka, and as *kipang* by people in northern New Ireland, is in the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka H 136654.

Secret societies

◂ IV.2

Antje Denner

Honoring the dead through different forms of artistic expression in rituals of the mortuary, or commemorative, cycle is characteristic of the whole of New Ireland. While in northern New Ireland *malagan* ceremonies play a central part in this respect, secret societies play a major role in many parts of southern New Ireland. They are often mentioned in the literature but their contents and functions usually remain unclear and they have never been compared systematically.[1] In the following I shall briefly describe some of the more than a dozen male secret societies that are referred to in early and contemporary sources.[2] I go on to highlight some of the features they have in common and shed some light on their ritual and social significance.

Probably two of the best-known societies are *tubuan* and *iniet*, simply because they are frequently referred to in the literature on the Tolai of New Britain.[3] The *iniet* is a secret society, which the colonial administration and the missions desperately tried to put an end to and about which actually little is known. It is associated with the most potent forms of sorcery and is regarded as extremely powerful and dangerous. People believe that *iniet* men are able to take on the shape of animals that are associated with the *iniet* (e.g. sea eagles, sharks, and turtles) and go on spiritual journeys, during which they may kill and take vengeance on people, but also help and heal. The members of *iniet* are subject to very strict taboos, have command over helping spirits, and possess a spiritual alter ego. In this sense they are similar to the so-called *tena buai*, the members of *buai*. This society is associated predominantly with the creation of certain songs and dances. It subdivides into a number of individually named sections.

The *sokopana* society (also called *kenit* or *tabaran* in some areas) is mainly involved in communicating with the spirits of the dead and ancestors, whose voices are sounded through a number of taboo instruments such as the bull-roarer. *Tonore*, the society of the fish trappers, commands the magic and techniques of fishing. Some of the societies we know of only through references in historical sources. These include *papaua* and *langan* whose members manufactured stone figures, but also *kor*, *kamrakrak* and *lagulagu* that dealt with the prevention of illness and accidents and the art of healing. Since nearly all these societies had to do with preventive magic it is possible that some of them were supplanted by societies that, allegedly, involved even stronger forms of magic.

Secret societies not only have control over certain forms of esoteric knowledge, they also stage special performances in public. Two generic indigenous terms found in the literature that are used to circumscribe the secret knowledge, the enactments, and revelations in seclusion, as well as the public performances staged by these societies, are *kulap* and *pindik*, which mean as much as "secret" and "taboo." They are also used to refer to events during which special ritual installations are revealed.[5] The public performances are staged in the context of commemorative ceremonies and may include songs, dances, masks, the display of ritual objects, and special feats such as "eating fire."[4] All these displays are meant to show the audience what extraordinary powers and special forms of knowledge the members of the society have command over.

1. For further information on secret societies see: Albert 1987a, 1987b; Bell 1935; Denner 2002, 2003; Eves 1995, 1998: 51-57; Foster 1995: 202-206; Hahl 1907; Kingston 1998; Krämer 1916: 268-270, 1925: 24-29; Nachman 1981; Neuhaus 1962: 344-435; Parkinson 1907: 579-581; Schlaginhaufen 1959: 65-74; Stephan & Graebner 1907; Wagner 1986: 121-145.

2. As a rule, only men join secret societies but there seem to be some cases where women were granted membership too. Neuhaus is the only author to mention that among the Patpatar there once also existed a female sodality.

3. On *tubuan* and *iniet* among the Tolai of New Britain see Heermann 2001 and 2003.

4. A practice found in *papaua* and *pepen aiap* (a branch of *buai*) in which either burning logs or inedible, raw taro tubers are eaten.

5. See also IV.10.

In order to join a secret society the young men have to pass through initiation for which they have to pay a fee and during which they spend time in seclusion in a secret and tabooed location in the bush. The initiations are usually carried out in the preparatory stages leading up to a large commemorative feast. However, the public performances merely represent one aspect of the secret societies. They also concern themselves with supernatural powers, they communicate with spiritual beings such as bush and ancestral spirits, they have a command of knowledge of a variety of magical practices—sorcery, love magic, or healing—and are engaged in achieving and demonstrating physical and psychical strength. Thus, male secret societies fulfill various functions, display exoteric as well as esoteric features, and serve both individual and collective needs. The purpose of staging a public performance is to honor the deceased. The man who organizes the feast and commissions the public performance by a secret society gains status and prestige, just as does the leader of the performing group. The acquisition of secret knowledge and magic power, on the other hand, is a more private reason for joining a secret society and people are usually very discreet about it.

It appears that a man can be a member of several secret societies at the same time, and every region has more than one active society. Some of them appear to function more like male initiatory societies—i.e. every male of the community is initiated into the society—while others seem to be more exclusive sodalities, open only to a restricted number of men. In some cases, affiliation appears to be linked to membership in either a specific local or kin group. Through membership in several societies a man is able to gain a considerable amount of status and prestige, which seems to be one of the reasons why societies like *tubuan*, *sokapana* and *buai* are so popular and rapidly proliferating. Membership in one or several societies is certainly a prerequisite of personal power but it is not the only criterion. There are a number of other conditions a man has to fulfill in order to achieve a leadership position.

South of Namatanai, the secret societies also constitute significant art-producing organizations. Here the public performances are believed to be especially power-laden and effective and to emit a very special form of potency. However, next to them there exist a number of other, more profane dances and masking events that feature less secrecy and restricted knowledge but are very popular all the same.[6]

6. See also III.2.

Tubuan

◂ IV.3

Sean Kingston

Tubuan are spirits, performances of the collective dead in the form of large masks by a male initiatory society, that play an important role in life-cycle rituals, most especially funerary rites, in southern New Ireland.[1] Despite their continued importance, enduring from the earliest European contact into current times, they are little known to Western observers and collectors, partly because of the regime of secrecy regarding them.[2]

In stark contrast to the *malagan*, not a single documented New Ireland *tubuan* has been found in any collection, public or private, worldwide, despite extensive surveys.[3] This is notwithstanding the fact that records of European encounters with *tubuan* date back to Duperrey's stay at New Ireland's southern end in 1823.[4] The early records suggest that the *tubuan* society extended over a large section of the southern coast in the 19th and early 20th century, with reports from the Patpatar, Kandas and Siar language groups.[5]

There are also numerous early reports of *tubuan* in the Duke of Yorks and the Tolai area of New Britain, some of which date its presence there to only a short period before the arrival of the missionary George Brown in 1875. With the increasing European settlement in northern New Britain, and the national prominence of the city of Rabaul, this genre of mask has become nationally identified with the Tolai,[6] entirely eclipsing its association with New Ireland. Local histories, however, recount that both the Tolai themselves and the *tubuan* migrated to New Britain from Siar.[7] Indigenous southern New Ireland *tubuan*, although widely held to be "the same thing" as those from the Duke of Yorks or the Tolai, are actually quite different in many of their details and surrounding rituals, though imported Tolai songs, dances, and masks are regularly incorporated into New Ireland performances.

The term *tubuan*, although well known in New Ireland, may itself derive from the Tolai, the local term for all varieties of the mask being *nataka*. Most simply, all masks consists of a "body" of green rattan leaves, the arrangement of which can vary quite considerably depending on the spirit concerned, and a "head" that is the primary locus for their differentiation and identity, and has copyright designs that are unique to each named *nataka*.

"Traditionally," there were only two types of *nataka* in New Ireland: *nantoi* and *dukduk*. *Nantoi* are the mother *tubuan*, individual masks the ownership of which define ritual leaders. They are tall figures with a characteristic forward-leaning profile, said to lean over their children, the *dukduk*, as a hen bears over its chicks. The ritual leaders identify with their *nantoi*, going by the same name for the duration of rituals, and with their backs bearing similar cordyline leaves. The front of the mask is generally of a fairly simple design, consisting of a bisecting vertical line descending from a red feature, and flanked symmetrically by two eyes. These eyes are a key defining feature of *nantoi*. They are the most powerful and dangerous aspect of the spirit. Although women and non-initiates are compelled to watch all the *nataka* dance, to catch the glance of the *nantoi* is most perilous, especially to women.

1. See Kingston 1998, 2003, 2005.

2. Though the author has been initiated into the *tubuan* society, there are many specifics relating to it that he is precluded from discussing here.

3. By Michael Gunn, above all.

4. Duperrey 1826, Rivière & Einam 1993. This was actually a little before the earliest evidence we have for a European encounter with *malagan* (1836–1839, according to Gunn 1997: 11), which clutter collections by their thousands.

5. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 120; Baudouin 1883: 136; Hahl 1907: 315. See also Albert 1987a: 27-35.

6. Even appearing on the 50 Kina banknote.

7. Simet 1977: 2-3; Sack 1987.

Fig. 16
Two *nantoi* dancing.
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

A *dukduk* mask is given to a man by his ritual leader/*nantoi* on his initiation. These initiates only have rights to their own *dukduk* design, but as it may have been given to many men, it is not uncommon for identical masks to dance together. *Dukduk* are tall, slim, vertical cones, whose designs generally consist of simple bands of color surmounted by a tall pole with cordyline leaves or feathers on top. Unlike *nantoi*, they have no eyes, and they are often referred to as "blind houses." Significantly, *dukduk* are not particularly dangerous or feared. These thin, hopping forms are depicted as entirely dependent on their fat, vigorous, aggressive mothers. The *dukduk*'s lack of sight is linked with their, and their owners, dependent and subservient position *vis-à-vis* the staring *nantoi* and their owning ritual leaders.

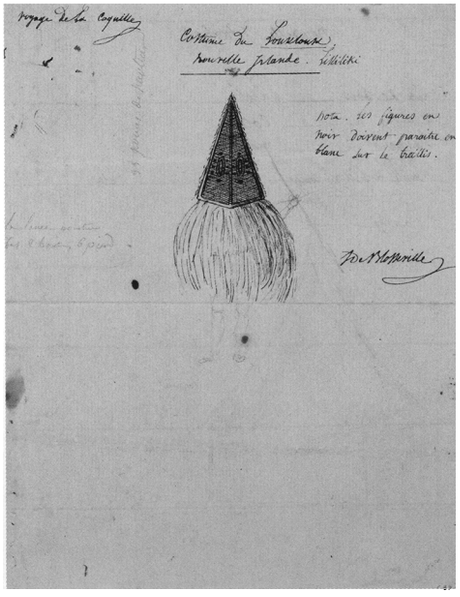
The final type of *tubuan* used, and one placed between the *nantoi* and *dukduk* in terms of status, is the *koropo*. These are regarded as relative newcomers to the Lak scene, an innovation taken from the Tolai which closely resembles what they would call *tubuan*, their mother masks.[8] The shortest form of mask, they may either lean forward like *nantoi* or stand straight like *dukduk*. Their designs are far more elaborate and varied than either of the indigenous styles. Because of this perceived stylishness and their lightness, they are the most popular masks to dance in. All have eyes, though smaller than those

8. See Errington 1974.

Fig. 17
A *dukduk*.
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

Fig. 18
Koropo.
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

of *nantoi*, and often other apparently anthropomorphic features such as "noses" and "mouths." The backs of these masks have, further, often apparently "abstract" and quite intricate, designs upon them. These frequently relate to the *koropo*'s origin story. Most owners of *koropo*, unlike most possessors of *nantoi* and *dukduk*, can give accounts of the genesis of their mask—indeed many of them are first or second generation owners, having either "originated" the new mask or been given the mask by someone who has. These masks may have been dreamt, often while sleeping in a place associated with a place-spirit, and are often given to the dreamer, or the dreamer is instructed to give it to a third party, by a deceased ritual leader. Alternatively, a person might simply see a mask while alone in an auspicious place such as the deep bush (or other places associated with place-spirits, such as on the reef or in ficus trees).



◂ **Fig. 19**
Man wearing a body mask. Sketch made by Jules Baron de Blosseville, at Likiliki village, Siar region, southern New Ireland, 1823, and entitled *"Costume de Louklouk, Nouvelle-Irlande."*
New Zeland, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library.

▸ **pl. 25**
Germany, Göttingen, Völkerkundliche Sammlung der Universität.
Oz 1861
Wooden axe with steel blade; probably a type called *asok* or *hasok* which was used for killing men.
Southern New Ireland, east coast Sursurunga region, Nokon village [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Otto Schlaginhaufen, 1908, who bought it from Kéletau of Nokon.
Acquired from the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde, 1939.
Wood, steel; lime, black and red pigments.
L: 130; W: 20; D: 5 cm.

Lor

Sean Kingston

Lor, and its variants, is the word for "skull" in various languages of southern New Ireland and northern New Britain, and has also referred to a confusing range of masks across this region.[1] Two types of *lor* mask among the 19th century Tolai are discussed in Parkinson's 1907 *Dreissig Jahre in der Südsee*: those of the first variety were constructed from painted vegetable pulp upon a base of actual facial bones, and were apparently intended to appear lifelike, possibly even as portraits; the second variety, which he depicts as archaisms originating in New Ireland, he describes as "consisting of a curved board in the shape of a face with a carved nose, a slot for the mouth and round eye holes. The background painting is white, and black and red stripes mark the individual parts of the face. They are, as a rule, provided with a helmet-like frame densely covered with fibres, representing hair."[2] These indeed appear to be similar to *lor* masks collected in the Kandas region of southern New Ireland by the SMS *Möwe* expedition of 1904.[3] This kind of *lor* is still known in southern New Ireland, as is a performance called *lorlor*, which derives from the Lambel inland or bush people/language. George Corbin also gives some details of contemporary Tolai masks termed *alor*,[4] again similar to the second type described by Parkinson, except that they have "superstructures" of a figure or snakes emerging from the top.[5]

Throughout the region, bones, in particular skulls, have important symbolic roles both within traditional mortuary rituals, and in the invocation of ancestors and spirits. Though the information available is sketchy, this, unsurprisingly, provides a common theme in all the accounts of (*a*)*lor*(*r*), most of which are said to represent "spirits" of some sort. According to Parkinson, the masks made from actual skull fragments were held in front of the face to facilitate exchanges or distributions, at marriages and other events, which, unmasked, might cause shame or status conflicts. Parkinson's second type of *lor* were used in *malangene tabaran*, "spirit" dances which were presented for the amusement of those present, men and women, without any special regard for the masks themselves (a stark contrast to *tubuan*, for instance). Stephan and Graebner write of southern New Ireland *lor* masks being used in dances in honor of the sun; one of their masks is also identified as representing a bad spirit that lives in the forest. It is interesting to note that two of the five *lor* masks they published and collected were made for sale, and one appears to be a "European."[6] Corbin's modern Tolai informants suggested that *alor* spirits were related to the *palawot* (sacred stones in which spirits reside) and that they could do good or evil depending on how they were treated.

Just as did the Tolais at the turn of the century and in the 1970s, contemporary southern New Irelanders portrayed *lor* to me as somewhat of a historical remnant, one whose identity had become rather diluted since its heyday. They often identified *lor* as a kind of *tipang*,[7] which, while strictly speaking refers to the masked "bush man" that comes into the village as the first public sign that the *tubuan* are abroad, has come to cover other similar masked, "not quite human" or "spirit," figures that appear at dances and, particularly, female initiations. *Lor* are frequently grouped with two other varieties of *tipang*: *song*, a bush man covered in hair, often depicted as taller or shorter than

1. Variants include *lorr*, *lorlor*, and *alor*.
2. Parkinson 1999 [1907]: 258-259.
3. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 125-126, Taf. IX.
4. Corbin 1976.
5. Similar to that featured in Parkinson's 1907 [1999] unattributed Plate 44—the caption to this image is merely "dancers representing spirits."
6. A symbolic conflation of "Europeans" with spirits is less remarkable than it may seem; both come from "wild" regions beyond that inhabited by New Irelanders, and both, like bones themselves, are often categorized as "white."
7. *Tipang* is known as *kipang* or *kipong* in the northern part of New Ireland.

Fig. 20
A *lor/tipang* dancing with a senior woman at a female initiation.
Photo taken by Sean Kingston.

humans; and *sasangmat*, a bush woman, with breasts long enough to lasso unsuspecting men. *Lor* and *song* masks have a reputation for non-lethal violence, breaking property, or attacking people in order to extract resources. They often have white body paint and green leaf/grass coverings, and sometimes carry a ceremonial axe associated with the *tubuan*. The tone of their dance performances is generally otherworldly and often humorous. They are clumsy, and combine their violence with a "wild" sexuality. When they visit the women at their initiation ceremonies, old women frequently rise from the group to do lewd, hip-gyrating dances with them.

pl. 26
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 23797
Wooden mask; collected with the name *lorr*.
Southern New Ireland, west coast Siar region,
Lamassa Island [published original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Emil Stephan
(S.M.S. *Möwe*), 1904. Acquired 1905.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell, rattan; lime,
blue pigment, red ochre; manufactured textile.
H: 29; W: 21.5; D: 22 cm.

Links with New Britain

◂ IV.5

Antje Denner

The villages of the west coast of New Ireland, the Duke of York Islands, and the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain have maintained close relationships for centuries and still do so today. According to oral tradition, the Tolai people, who now populate the latter two regions, originally came from New Ireland. Linguistic data is able to confirm the oral tradition as the Tolai language, called Kuanua, belongs to the same language family as the languages spoken in central and southern New Ireland.[1]

In earlier days the people used large, ocean-going canoes for traveling and trading across the sea, thus sustaining stable relationships between the peoples of the different islands. The carved prow of an ocean-going canoe (see pl. 27) shown in the exhibition thus stands symbolically for the relationships between New Ireland and New Britain. Emil Stephan purchased this detachable prow on the southern tip of the west coast of New Ireland. The object, locally called *kon*, is carved in openwork and painted red, white, and blue. It represents a stylized bird's head with a serrated crest, which originally held a plant-fiber tassel in its beak.[2] The tassel and the leaf-fiber tuft originally attached to the neck of the prow possibly served magical purposes. The term for the white painted latticework, *a umbene*, suggests that it represents a hunting or fishing net. Located on the side in the upper half is a framed figure called *vuakinn*, i.e. "small kangaroo."

The manner in which these attachments were constructed did not make the canoes any more seaworthy. Moreover, their size and delicate design suggest that they served as an expression and marker of prestige. Stephan observed that on older canoes the ornament was firmly affixed to the body of the boat, while on later models it was separately worked and inserted into the bow. According to Stephan, this innovation results from the fact that these valuable attachments were only put to use during the actual journey, otherwise they were safeguarded in the house of the owner.[3] Parkinson mentions that this type of canoe was exclusively commissioned by wealthy and influential men and launched ceremoniously with a large feast; he also notes that they were called *uaqa na pedik*—"canoe of secrecy"—which suggests that they were regarded as being linked with the realm of ancestors and spirits in some manner.[4] Presumably the spirits were invoked during canoe construction and on journeys to provide support and protection.

Tongilam, one of Stephan's informants, told him that the boats, or at least the prows, were sold to Mioko and "far beyond." During a visit to the Duke of York Islands Stephan did in fact see several boat ornaments from the Kandas, area and "in Matupi [near Rabaul] a *Mon* [ocean-going canoe] that had been built and purchased in Lamassa [southern New Ireland]."[5] Comparison shows[6] that the large, towering canoe prows from southern New Ireland and the Gazelle Peninsula are designed two-dimensionally and usually display a bird's head as the basic shape. A further typical feature is the openwork carving which is especially intricate and delicate on pieces from New Britain where the motifs also tend to be more abstract and geometric. The little information we have on the iconography frequently bears reference to the animal world. Apart from the above-mentioned birds, stylized images of butterflies, fishes, crabs, and

1. See Wurm & Hattori 1981, Map 14.
2. See Stephan & Graebner 1907: Taf. IV, Nr. 2, where this prow ornament was first published.
3. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 82.
4. Parkinson 1907: 106-107.
5. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 72.
6. Stephan & Graebner 1907: Taf. IV and V and further documentary pieces in the museums in Berlin and Dresden.

Fig. 21
A group of men in an ocean-going canoe (*mon*) in southern New Ireland, about 1900. The canoe prow ornament depicts a man on a horse.

shells are often shown. Spirals and concentric circles may indicate the lid of the sea snail *Turbo petholatus* or fern offshoots. Some of the prow ornaments display more naturalistic, figurative motifs in the shape of birds, lizards, or human figures or, as on the exhibited work, a tree-kangaroo.

Ocean-going canoes of this type are found throughout New Ireland and its offshore islands, in New Britain, and in the northern Solomon Islands and are generally known under the name *mon*. They were used along different routes for trading basic commodities, food, and stimulants such as betel nut, as well as a number of other material objects and non-material intellectual items. The trading partners not only exchanged goods but usually also enjoyed marriage and ritual relationships and visited each other on the occasion of feasts and ceremonies. Due to the linkages created by this system of trade and ceremonial communication, the Tolai and the peoples of southern New Ireland share many cultural features, which is reflected in the proliferation of objects of everyday use, art-works—masks, dances, songs, etc.—and secret societies.

One such example is the *tubuan* secret society (and mask) that has its origin in the Kandas-Siar region of New Ireland, from where it spread to New Britain. *Lor* masks are also common to both areas. Among the Tolai, the term *lor* designates masks made of overmodeled skulls and wooden masks. In New Ireland it applies only to the latter. These skull masks are frequently mentioned in connection with the *iniet*.[7] This secret

7. See IV.2.; on the *iniet* in New Britain see Heermann 2001, 2003.

society is also known in New Ireland, and a number of clues suggest that it was imported from New Britain or the Duke of York Islands quite long ago. The same probably holds true for the secret society called *buai*, which has certain elements in common with *iniet* but is basically more focused on the creation of certain dances. A myth recorded on Anir tells of the origin of *buai* and how it spread across the region under discussion. Dances that are associated with *buai* are encountered in the whole region, albeit in many local variations and offering differing interpretations. According to the myth, the spiritual source of power (in the shape of a human head) came from the sea first to the shores of northern New Ireland, but it was rejected by the people there and traveled on to the southern region where it was accepted. The myth actually offers the indigenous explanatory model for the difference between the art forms found among the Tolai and the peoples of southern New Ireland on the one hand and the art forms of northern New Ireland on the other.[8]

8. The myth is published in full length in Denner 2003.

◂ **Fig. 22**
Canoe prow ornaments from southern New Ireland (1-4) and from the Duke of York Islands (5-7) as well as carved dance ornaments from Lamassa in southern New Ireland (8-10).
[From Stephan & Graebner 1907, *Neu Mecklenburg (Bismarck-Archipel)*, Tafel VI.]

▸ **pl. 27**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 23727
Ornament (*kon*) from the prow of a large plank-built ocean-going canoe, the entire image represents the head of a bird with a red comb as the crest.
Southern New Ireland, west coast Siar region, Lamassa Island [published original field data].
Probably collected by Emil Stephan (S.M.S. *Möwe*), 1904. Acquired 1905.
Wood; lime, red ochre, blue and brown pigments; leaf material, fiber.
H: 149; W: 42; D: 12 cm.

Men's house architecture

◂ IV.6

Antje Denner

Men's houses[1] are not only the place where the men of a community spend a lot of their time—as the name implies—but represent political centers where counsels are held and communal actions are planned. Furthermore, they constitute the focal point of commemorative feasts. The construction of a new men's house, or the renovation of an existing one, takes place in the run-up to such a feast and the building process itself is marked by numerous ceremonial and festive acts.[2]

The different regions of southern New Ireland display a variety of house types and forms. In the Barok, Patpatar, and Susurunga areas as well as on Lihir Island, the men's houses usually have a rectangular ground plan, a pitched roof, and are located within a massive coral stone enclosure that is entered via a towering, V-shaped, tree fork. According to Neuhaus, even at the beginning of the 20th century only the older men's houses had carved house posts.[3] The V-shaped entrances to the enclosure were decorated with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic motifs.[4] In Siar and Kandas the men's houses today are also rectangular in shape and have pitched roofs but in earlier days they used to have an oval ground plan and a roof reaching to the ground on all sides with two entrances on one side.[5] In the early 20th century Stephan encountered only few men's houses with carved posts in the Kandas area while in Siar they were a common feature.[6] In the Muliama area (Fanamaket) and in Kalil (Susurunga, on the west coast), Stephan and members of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition described and photographed rectangular men's houses with pitched roofs or with barrel-shaped roofs that reached to the ground. The walls that remained visible consisted of painted, or, on occasion, of relief-carved boards.[7] The white, lime-grounded boards were decorated with a variety of motifs painted with charcoal and red earth pigments. Next to two monitor lizards and some patterns, possibly showing birds, one recognizes geometric motifs in the shape of triangles, discs, concentric circles, squares, as well as floral bands. However, little is known about the iconography of these designs. The concentric circles probably relate to motifs of the *tubuan* and the zoomorphic designs possibly refer to representations of ancestor figures and other spiritual beings. On Anir and Tanga, the permanent men's houses were rectangular in outline and had a pitched roof but there also existed a number of special and separately named, often barrel-shaped, temporary houses which were built especially for the final feast of a commemorative cycle and which governed their own set of ritual acts, procedures, and regulations.[8] The ridge beams of these buildings, some of them up to 30 meters long, were carried by a central row of carved and painted posts. The number of posts corresponded to the number of pigs distributed at the feast.

Common to the men's houses of southern New Ireland were their sculptured posts that often displayed anthropomorphic figures, either in part or in whole.[9] According to Neuhaus they represented ancestor figures: "The spirits of the persons are there to protect the house from thieves and enemies … if strangers should secretly enter the *Mamel* the spirits would address them, frighten them and, if necessary, even fight them."[10]

1. Tischner 1965 offers a general overview of house forms and types.

2. For a description of men's house construction and accompanying rituals see for example Bell 1949; Foster 1995: 108-139; Kingston 1998: chapter 4; Neuhaus 1962: 20-22; Wagner 1986: 148.

3. Neuhaus 1962: 22 and Abb. 22.

4. See for example Krämer-Bannow 1916: Abb. 80 and Schlaginhaufen 1959: Abb. 7.

5. Albert 1987b: Fig. 12; Stephan & Graebner 1907: Abb. 91, 101, 104, 117; Hüskes 1932: 58; Schlaginhaufen 1959: 54 and Abb. 13. According to Kingston 1998 the last men's house of this type was to be found in the village of Rei.

6. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 95.

7. Krämer-Bannow 1916: 34 and Abb. 22, 29; Schlaginhaufen 1959: 55-56 and Abb. 14; Stephan & Graebner 1907: Abb. 88. See also the historical field photographs in the archive of the Linden-Museum Stuttgart, Inv. Nr. 3523 (527), 3517 (563) and in the Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg, Inv. Nr. 51-58.

8. Men's houses of this type are shown in Bell 1937 and Schlaginhaufen 1959: Abb. 31.

9. See for example the Lambom posts in Stephan 1907, Doppeltafel I/II, Nr. 7 (VI 23764) and 8 (VI 23763); a post from either Tanga or Anir in the Berlin Museum without inventory number; and Patpatar posts in Neuhaus 1962: Abb. 1.

10. Neuhaus 1962: 22-23.

pl. 28
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 2822 a, b
Pair of wooden architectural panels, carved and painted, probably from a men's house, a men's taboo house, or an initiation house.
New Ireland [registration data].
Date of collection in New Ireland not know
Acquired before 1880, probably from Hernsheim & Co.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre black pigment; vine, fiber.
H: 81; W: 22; D: 5 cm.

Fig. 23
Carved entrance to a men's house enclosure.
Rehendel village, Sokirik area, West Coast, Patpatar region of central New Ireland, 3 March 1909.
Photo probably taken during the 1907–1909 Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

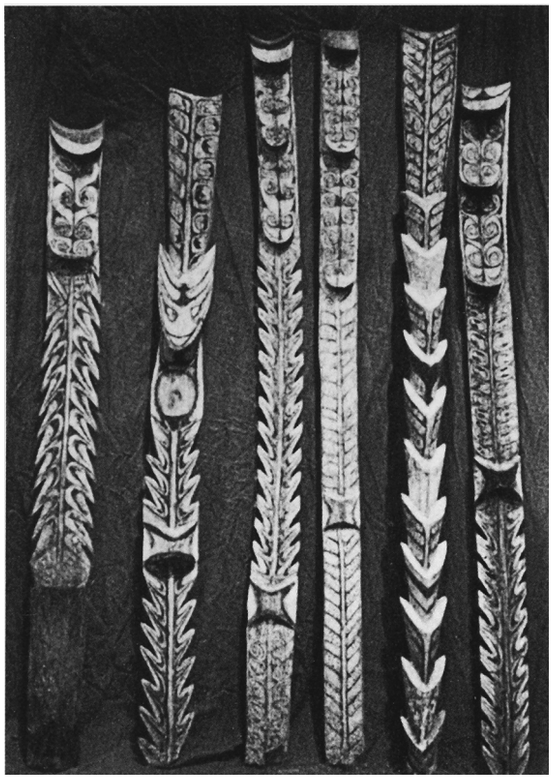


Fig. 24
Carved and painted house posts from men's houses on the Tanga Islands.
[From Schlaginhaufen 1959, *Muliama*, Abb. 35.]

Fig. 25
Wooden, carved and painted house posts (3-8) and a figurative non-supporting pillar (9) from men's houses in southern New Ireland.
[From Stephan 1907, *Südseekunst*, Doppeltafel I/II, Nr. 3-9.]

This view was confirmed by informants from Anir and Siar who explained that the posts were animated. The spirits not only moved around the house at night in order to fend off nightly attackers, they also provided vital support in war and were even capable of lending a helping hand in love affairs. The men's house posts were inspirited in a special ritual, and when the men's house was abandoned they had to be ritually buried at a particular site. All information indicates that especially the naturalistically carved human figures represented portraits of important former members of the men's house community—usually men, but occasionally also women—whose protection and support the people relied on and who were remembered and honored through their images.[11]

Many of the posts kept in museum collections display more abstract designs, at least to the eye of a Western viewer, showing geometric and what look like floral motifs.[12] The information we have on pieces from southern New Ireland indicate that the abstract patterns also relate to the human body but in combination with motifs that bear reference to plants, animals, and other natural objects. In view of the significance of the *tubuan* in southern New Ireland, it is probably not a surprise that some of the men's house posts show motifs that represent, or at least refer to, this mask figure. According to Kingston one also encounters "bull-roarer spirits." On the whole one can probably say that the more geometrically designed posts bear reference to the presence and potency of the ancestral and spiritual world, but in a less personalized mode.[13]

The abstract-styled house posts from Tanga, Anir, and Fanamaket feature additionally a row of recurring motifs. These include images of pig jaws, shell rings,

11. Kingston 1998: chapter 4; Denner, fieldnotes 2000 and 2001–2002.

12. For example posts from Lamassa and Lambon in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, in Stephan 1907: Doppeltafel I/II, Nr. 4 (VI 23766), 11 (VI 23771), 3 (VI 23767); posts from Tanga in Schlaginhaufen 1959: Abb. 35; and posts from Muliama in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin, Inv. Nr. VI 33615 and VI 33620.

13. Stephan 1907: 27-31 and Doppeltafel I/II; Kingston 1998: chapter 4; Albert 1987a: 368-376.

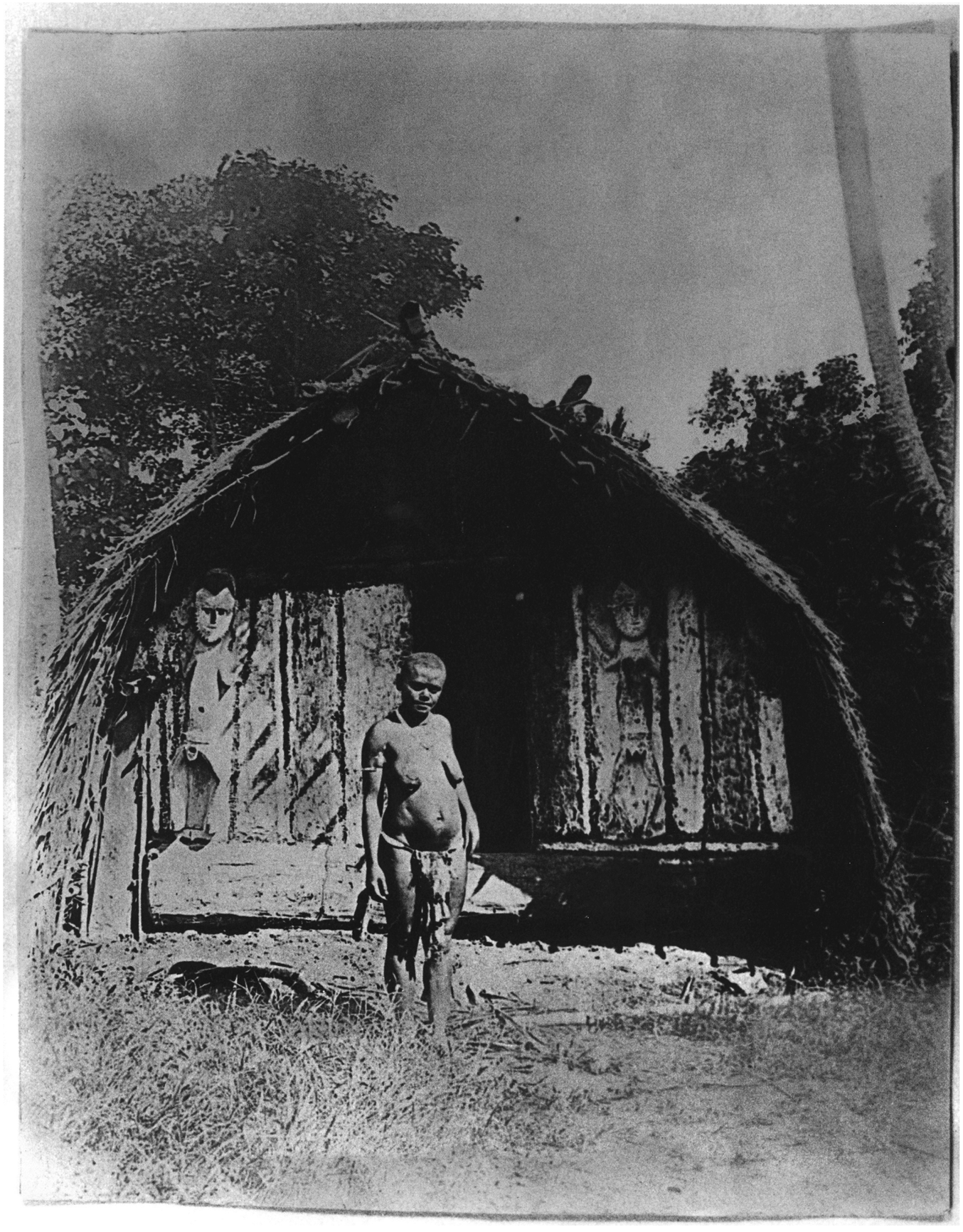


Fig. 26
A woman standing in front of a house in central New Ireland, about 1900.
Photo taken by missionary Fellman.

specific plants, and vaguely anthropomorphic faces with oblique eyes. While the pig jaws and shell rings point with their symbolism to the rituals of the commemorative cycle and the continuity of the men's house, the plant and face images are associated with secret sites in the bush that belong to the men's house community and where special spirit beings are believed to reside.

In summary, the following can be said of the men's house posts: they represent material manifestations which reflect the history of a men's house thereby underlining its legitimate claim to land ownership and residential rights. They either show portraits of real, but deceased, persons or they are references to specific ancestors and spirits, or nether-worldly beings in general. The more abstract-designed posts give room to more than one interpretation, in fact this kind of ambiguity and multivalence often appears to be intended. The posts serve the members of a men's house community and its leaders as illustrations and as mnemonic devices to memorize historic and esoteric knowledge, which they are reliant on for status validation of their kin group within the wider society.

Wooden figures

◂ IV.7

Antje Denner & Philippe Peltier

Wooden figures of the central and southern regions of New Ireland are quite distinct in form from the northern *malagan* figures. Their distribution as well as the available information on them indicate that they were usually employed as memorial figures carved to honor the dead.

Historical and contemporary sources show that in the southern part of New Ireland the same generic term is used for the carved house posts that support the beams of the roof of a men's house as well as for wooden figures of varying sizes which were either positioned next to an undecorated post or somewhere else in, or in front of, the men's house. In the village of King,[1] Stephan purchased a carved supporting post from a men's house and a large wooden figure that was tied to a plain post; both were termed *pano-pano*.[2] House posts in the Siar region are called *sinna*[3] or *singah*,[4] whereas *silnga* is a term recorded for wooden figures in various villages of the Susurunga region, and *sula* in villages of the Konomala region.[5] On Anir and Tanga, people use the term *tu taur* for house posts as well as for wooden men's house figures.

People in several regions south of Namatanai said that wooden figures were made to enhance the aesthetic appearance of a men's house. Often they portrayed important, deceased members of the community who were hereby remembered and honored. On Anir, a men's house was built in the early 1960s for a large commemorative feast in order to "finish" a group of deceased members of a particular lineage. The house included six *tu taur*; all of them showed images of the deceased who were to be honored in the feast. Four of the *tu taur* were in the form of carved posts. The fifth was a crouching female figure depicting a named woman. The last one portrayed a big man; it consisted of a wooden figure showing a human body but, in place of a carved wooden head, the skull of the dead man had been exhumed, overmodeled, and painted prior to the feast, and then positioned on the wooden body.[6]

Some men's house carvings may also include images of animals. Men from Konomala and Siar said they had seen such images in the men's houses of their home villages, for instance, carvings of fish, snakes, lizards, and tree-kangaroos. The smaller animal carvings were located under the gable or on a crossbeam.

Although the decorative, or *bilas*-function[7] of carved figures was often addressed first, a more meaningful connection between the art-works and the history of a men's house community and its leaders usually came to light in the course of further discussions. The figures portray, or refer to, persons, events, and places belonging to the kin group in question. Depicted animals and plants are associated with the spirit world, often representing emanations of spirits in the world of humans. When viewing the carvings, people recall memories of, and knowledge about, historical and spiritual connections of the owning kin group. Another characteristic of the men's house figures is that they can be animated and thus made powerful, similar to the house posts, and, like these, they have to be buried or discarded in a particular way in a special place when they have served their cause.[8]

1. West coast Kandas region.

2. Stephan & Graebner 1907: Taf. VII/VIII, Nr. 1 and 9.

3. Stephan & Graebner 1907: Taf. VII/VIII.

4. Kingston 1998, chapter 4.

5. If not referenced otherwise, information in this text is based on the fieldnotes of Gunn, Peltier, and Denner.

6. Two other figures in the shape of carved, headless human bodies were collected by Schlaginhaufen in 1909 on Lihir and are now in Berlin, VI Sa. 6039 and 6040. Carved human figures bearing overmodeled skulls are to be found in a fairly wide region, as examples from the north go to show (see IV.4).

7. *Bilas* is a Melanesian Tok Pisin word. It can mean "decorative" or "decoration," but at the same time the term refers to enhancing something with power, in the sense that things that are beautiful are also powerful (see also III.2).

8. See IV.6.

9. Neuhaus 1962: 355, 360-364, 379-380, Abb. 5, 396, 399, 401, 423.

10. E.g. Schnee 1904: 325; Heermann 2003: 234-245 gives an outline of what is known about the *iniet*.

11. Duperrey 1826: Pl. 24. Likiliki is in the Siar region on the southern tip of New Ireland.

12. Stephan & Graebner 1907: 8, 97-98.

Not every wooden figure to be found is a men's house figure. In the Patpatar region, for example, people use the term *palimbuo* to refer to wooden figures in men's houses and *kutpuo* for figures made of either stone or wood that apparently were not placed inside a men's house. Neuhaus mentions anthropomorphic and zoomorphic wooden carvings representing ancestors or spirits in his section on secret societies.[9] In the *iniet* society both stone and wooden figures were common.[10] However, it is unlikely that figures originally made for use in secret societies were handed over freely to dealers, government officials, missionaries, or collectors since these items were regarded as being too sacred and powerful. Another possible explanation for the absence of such artifacts in museums is that potential collectors never saw them, as secret societies had their meeting places outside the village in the bush. One should keep in mind that without detailed information on a particular piece one cannot be absolutely sure where and in what kind of context it was used. In his atlas, Duperrey published the picture of a house (*pagode*) in the village of Likiliki containing "idols,"[11] but it is not

Fig. 27
"Naturels de la Nouvelle-Irlande" in Duperrey L. J., *Voyage autour du monde exécuté par Ordre du Roi sur la corvette de sa majesté "La Coquille" pendant les années 1823, 1824, 1825,* Paris, 1826, pl. 24.

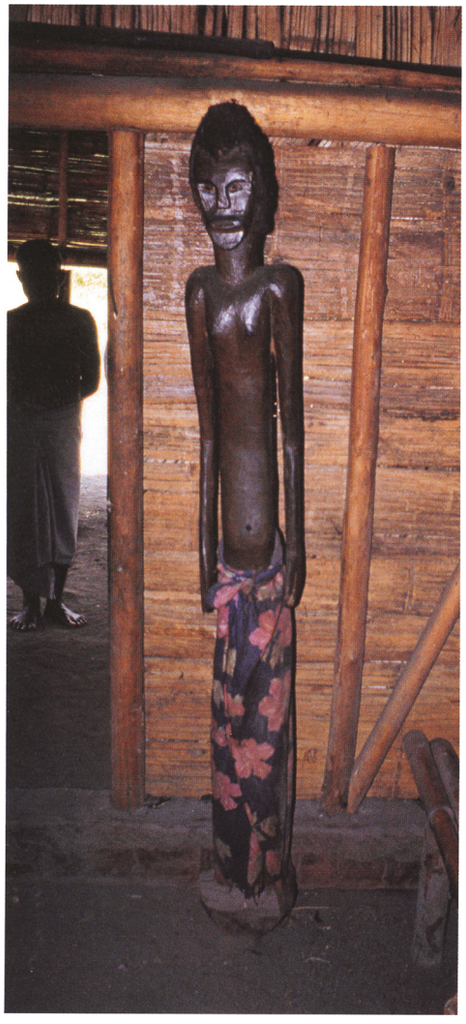


Fig. 28
A wooden figure (*sula*) in men's house, representing the man Smelanu who had died about a year before. Purunkum village, east coast Konomala region, southern New Ireland, 2001. *Photo taken by Philippe Peltier.*

clear whether it was a men's house or a *tubuan* house as Stephan suggested.[12]

Three male figures in this section, one from Namatanai (pl. 32), one from Anir or Tanga (pl. 31), and one from the Muliama region (pl. 30), were clearly identified as men's house figures that had been made in the course of commemorative ceremonies to represent a deceased big man. People from Anir identified one of these (pl. 31) on the basis of its body paint and its posture as a dancer. The fourth figure (pl. 29) is an image of a European, clearly recognizable by his hat and by the fact that he is riding a horse. Horses were introduced into New Ireland in 1902 or 1904,[13] but the museum in Budapest acquired the figure in 1898. Thus it is possible that the artist might have seen a horse during a visit to the Gazelle Peninsula and carved the figure from memory. This assumption is supported by the style of the figure that locates it in the southern region of New Ireland. The only female figure (pl. 33) in this section was collected before 1879 and was originally part of a male/female couple.[14] Although made of wood and of considerable size, its color, overall shape, and certain designs, such as its hairstyle, seem to relate it to the *kulap* stone figures.

13. Personal communication between Jim Ridges and Michael Gunn, 2003.

14. Schmeltz & Krause 1881: 16, Taf. VIII, Abb. 2.

pl. 29
Hungary, Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum.
14332
Painted wooden figure of a European man sitting on a horse; as horses did not reach New Ireland before 1902, this figure was probably carved from memory by a man who had seen a European man on a horse in New Britain.
Southern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Giovanni Bettanin, 1897–1898.
Wood; lime, red ochre, blue pigment.
H: 56; W: 7; L: 21 cm.

◂ **pl. 30**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 33867
Wooden squatting figure with elongated body; probably made to represent a deceased leader and displayed in a men's house.
Southern New Ireland, east coast, Muliama region [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Otto Schlaginhaufen, Deutsche Marine-Expedition, 1907–1909.
Acquired 1908.
Wood; red, blue, and white pigments; shell.
H: 82; W: 30; D: 30 cm.

▸ **pl. 31**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
13538
Painted wooden squatting male figure; probably made to represent a deceased leader and kept in a men's house. People from Anir recently identified this figure as that of a dancer, based upon the body paint and the posture.
Southern New Ireland, Anir (Feni) Islands [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland, probably 1899. Given by Rudolf von Bennigsen, Gouverneur of Kaiser Wilhelmsland (German New Guinea), 1901.
Wood; lime, red ochre, black pigment; shell.
H: 46; W: 16; D: 16.5 cm.

◂ **pl. 32**
Germany, München, Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde.
10.513
Naturalistic male wooden figure with red paint on lower half of face; probably made to represent a deceased clan leader and kept in a men's house.
Central New Ireland, Patpatar region, Namarodu village [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland by Albert Hahl, date not known. Acquired in 1910.
Wood; lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), pandanus fruit fibrous husks, shell.
H: 141; W: 30; D: 30 cm.

▸ **pl. 33**
Germany, Leipzig, Museum für Völkerkunde.
Me 10305
Painted wooden female figure, probably a portrait. In 1885 this female figure was acquired together with a male figure carved in the same style, now lost.
Southern New Ireland, probably east coast region [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland between 1860–1879.
Acquired from Museum Godeffroy, Hamburg, 1885.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); white pigment, blue pigment (possibly Prussian blue), purple-brown pigment.
H: 85; W: 22; D: 22 cm.

Stone figures

◂ IV.8

Michael Gunn

Punam is a village situated on a small hill several hundred meters inland from the east coast of southern New Ireland, about half an hour by road from the town of Namatanai. The people point to the clouds shrouding the top of the nearby mountain ridge to show us where the old village of Punam used to be. Their ancestors lived up in the mountains, in a valley that led off to the south. This valley and other inland valleys in the region were previously quite heavily populated, but the people moved down to the coast in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time a trail led from one coast to the other, over the mountain pass where Punam was located. Western men used to ride their horses along the track, and from their tall height they would look over the fence around the special house in Punam and see the stone figures that were kept there. They took them, one or two at a time, until none were left.

We found more than 200 stone figures from southern New Ireland that are now in museums or private collections in the West, where they are generally known as *kulap* figures. Although quite varied, they can be classed into two groups through two mutually exclusive variables:

- Around 10 percent are a type that features a notched disc shape around the neck; no eyebrow ridge is visible. These include Macleay 1574 (pl. 38), Macleay 1573 (pl. 37), and Sydney E 63173 (pl. 40).

- The majority of stone figures are a type that depicts a clearly defined eyebrow ridge and jawline, none have a neck disc. These include Chicago 105246 (pl. 39) and NY ST-2161 (pl. 41).

We can assume that the two types existed concurrently, at least for a time, because a sketch published in 1883 depicts 12 stone figures arranged in rows in a display house. Two of the figures are depicted with notched discs around the neck and the others appear to have been carved in the eyebrow-ridge type.[1] From museum registration data it seems that the neck-disc type died out shortly after the German presence was established in that area in the mid-1880s, and the eyebrow-ridge type continued until the 1930s. Figures with the distinctive eyebrow ridge can be found in versions that depict men wearing European clothes (pl. 41). The last phase of this tradition probably consisted of stone figures made for the tourist market around Namatanai.

The question is: are these two variants the product of two distinct carving schools whose carvers utilized the same source of stone? Or were both variants carved by the same artists but for different purposes?

Field data suggests that these figures were used in at least two different contexts—betrothal ceremonies and memorial portraits. In the early 20th century, Pater Neuhaus MSC interviewed a man who recalled a *langan* ceremony that took place in the village of Matanangas 60 years earlier.[2] Matanangas was located in the interior, about 8 km northwest of Punam. *Langan* seems to have been a type of secret society in which both

1. The sketch was published in Powell 1883, Frontispiece.
2. Neuhaus 1962: 402-408.
3. The name *Langan* was also used for the stone figures.

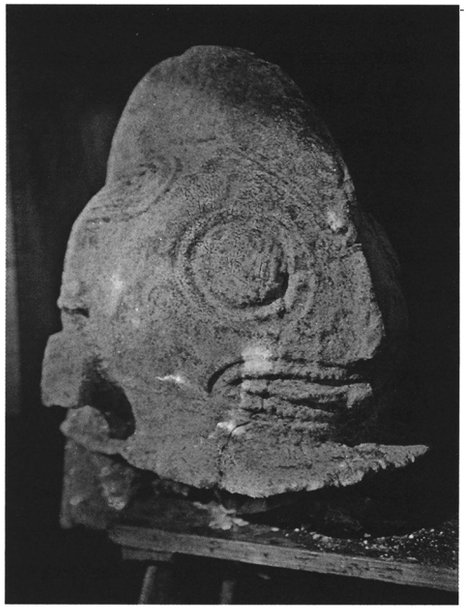


Fig. 29
Large stone head (*langan*) photographed between 1911 and 1944, near Matanangas (most likely on the east coast Patpatar Pala region, near Matantuduk, central New Ireland.
Photo probably taken by Karl Neuhaus.

girls and boys could be brought in as members.[3] During their initiation they were shown a row of stone figures, paired male and female. Each initiate was assigned a stone figure and received the name owned by the figure. From this, admittedly sketchy, account it is possible to interpret this ceremony as one of marriage betrothal.

The figures used in this ceremony were neck-disc figures similar in style to the very much larger figures, now lost, that Neuhaus excavated nearby (see fig. 29). In 1875 George Brown also recorded the neck-disc type of figure in the Hinsal-speaking village of Kalil on the west coast,[4] where he noted a painted chalk male figure and a much larger painted chalk female figure kept in a display house in a special enclosure.[5] It seems likely that these two figures were portraits. From the two reports it is apparent that variation in type is not due to context of use alone.

Evidence suggests the stone figures were used over a widespread area in the northern part of southern New Ireland. At Kabanut village in the west coast Hinsal-speaking area we were told that they were known as *kutpuo*—a generic name for a portrait of a person or a fish carved either in stone or in wood. The people there used to have portraits made of important people so they could remember them. The sculptures were kept in special enclosures, and people would pay to look at them. Further north in Saraha village the figures were known as *papawa*. On the east coast the Fanamaket-speaking people living in Muliama used the term *kulop* to refer to both stone and wooden figures carved as portraits of important people.

The stone figures all appear to have been made from a soft chalk limestone found in stream beds in the mountainous area near the old village of Punam; they were most likely made by people who lived inland in the mountains and whose descendants today call themselves Pitpittoka, or bush people. Neuhaus reports that a large number of artists must have been employed in making these figures, for there were very many, but most were smashed after they were used in ceremonial contexts.

After we examined several hundred of these stone figures, it became quite clear that the neck-disc type was a distinct variant. When we asked Abel Kolmau, a man of Pitpittoka ancestry, what the disc shape around the neck was about, he recalled that people in this region previously wore a type of clothing called *biar*, which resembled the disc shape around the neck. It consisted of leaves attached in a radial fashion to a collar around the neck so that the shoulders were covered.

We are reasonably confident that the pre-tourist stone carvings made in the eyebrow variant depicted real people. Several figures, especially females, are shown wearing marriage symbols such as shell arm rings and body belts. Married male-female couples are depicted in 5 percent of the stone figures, sometimes side by side, sometimes as two heads on one body.[6] In several instances couples are shown standing back to back, but are in fact in the act of having sexual intercourse. Of the individual figures there are roughly equal numbers of males and females, and according to New Irelanders some are images of children. Several female figures have open genital labia, possibly indicating that these women died during childbirth. Most of the female figures depict clearly defined but closed genital labia.

Some of the figures are not so easily categorized. Leipzig's Me 8290 (pl. 34) is the most unusual of the stone figures, but it is not known if she was made in the Punam region or elsewhere. She features a very large smile and open genitalia. Her flipper-like lower limbs

4. Hinsal is the southernmost "beach" dialect of Patpatar found on the west coast.

5. Brown 1908: 127.

6. In 2003 people from many regions of New Ireland identified photographs of the two-headed figures as a married couple—"one body, two minds."

◂ **Fig. 30**
Stone sharks resting on a human thigh-bone and placed between two coralline rock slabs. Messi (Mesi) village, west coast Madak region, northern New Ireland, 1962.
Photo taken by Sofus Christiansen.

▸ **pl. 34**
Germany, Leipzig, Museum für Völkerkunde. Me 8290
Unique female figure carved from limestone. Although this figure was not recognized by New Irelanders in 2001–2003, some suggested that it may have been associated with the *tubuan* society in which the *tubuan* is a mother figure.
Southern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Consul Weber, 1888.
Limestone; black and red pigments.
H: 35; W: 24; D: 11 cm.

and lack of upper limbs make her distinctly different from other stone figures from New Ireland. In 2001 and 2003 nobody in New Ireland was able to identify her from photographs. Another very unusual figure is Stuttgart 42690 (pl. 36) in which the relationship between the woman's head and her face is portrayed in a highly original manner.

Another type of stone figure carved from limestone was found in the Barok region, north of Namatanai. In 1908 Dr. Otto Born and Wilhelm Wostrack were shown a number of broken chalk figures that people from Loloba village (east coast Barok) had found in a cave above the sea (see pl. 35). These figures featured the distinctive hairstyle that was also found with the Tabar men on the canoe depicted in 1642 by Tasman's artist Gilsemans. The Loloba people did not know of a source of chalk in their area. In recent years, a number of related and probably old stone figures in human form have found their way to the international art market, all featuring the distinctive hairstyle and with arms carved in relief on the body of the figure; none are known that depict legs. The most likely source of these figures was the village of Kono, on the west coast of the Barok region, where there is a well-developed tradition of making and using stone figures for their *kabai* ceremonies.[7] (see pl. 36)

Brief mention should be made here of the stone sharks from several regions of northern New Ireland, particularly the Madak region and Tabar—both known for shark hunting.[8] On Tabar in 1982 I was shown a stone shark that was placed on a *masalai* site located in the jungle on the side of a hill. Stone sharks are made today at Kono village in the west coast Barok area, but it is not known if Kono was the source for the stone sharks in Madak and Tabar (see fig. 30).

7. In 2003 we visited Kono and interviewed several people who were able to give us details of the use of these stone figures which were called *vovo*.

8. More than 10 stone sharks from New Ireland are known in Western collections, all are now missing their tails. Although all were carved in a recognizable shark shape, they exhibit a wide range of variation in style and were probably carved by a number of different artists. See also Bühler 1946–1949; Christiansen 1964.

▾ **pl. 35**
Germany, Leipzig, Museum für Völkerkunde.
Me 8259
Limestone head carved in an early style;
collected from a cave site.
Central New Ireland, east coast Barok region,
near Loloba village [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland and given by
Dr. Otto Born, 1908.
Limestone.
H: 15; W: 11; D: 11 cm.

▸ **pl. 36**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
S. 42690
Stone figure; probably type known today as *vovo*.
Central New Ireland, possibly from west coast
Barok region [attributed MG].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired 2001.
Stone; red pigment.
H: 45; W: 11.5; D: 11.5 cm.

◂ **pl. 37**
Australia, Sydney, University of Sydney, Macleay Museum.
I 573
Female figure carved in limestone and painted. She is depicted supporting a cape over her head and wearing a belt of shell money around her waist—both are items which were given to the bride as part of the marriage settlement.
Southern New Ireland, region near the central isthmus [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland by either James Cockerell 1875–1876, or J. Brazier of the HMS *Blanche* in 1872.
Limestone (chalk); red pigment.
H: 22.5; W: 10; D: 5 cm.

▸ **pl. 38**
Australia, Sydney, University of Sydney, Macleay Museum.
I 574
Female figure carved from limestone and painted; depicted with a disc around her neck and a ridge on top of her head.
Southern New Ireland, region near the central isthmus [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland by either James Cockerell 1875–1876, or J. Brazier of the HMS *Blanche* in 1872.
Limestone (chalk); red, yellow, black, and indigo blue pigments.
H: 20; W: 6; D: 4.5 cm.

◂ **pl. 39**
USA, Chicago, Field Museum.
105246
Small female figure carved in limestone.
Southern New Ireland, region near the central isthmus [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from J. F. G. Umlauff & Co., 1905.
Limestone (chalk); red and black pigments.
H: 16.5; W: 7.5; D: 7.5 cm.

▸ **pl. 40**
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 63173
Double-headed figure, carved from limestone and painted. Probably made to represent a married couple, a relationship often described by New Irelanders as "two minds, one body."
Southern New Ireland, region near the central isthmus [attributed MG & PP].
Probably collected in New Ireland by the Methodist Missionary Rev. George Brown, 1875–1880.
Reregistered 1968.
Limestone (chalk); red, yellow, and black pigments.
H: 58; W: 20; D: 26 cm.

◂ **pl. 41**
USA, New York, American Museum of Natural History.
ST-2161
Male limestone figure; probably depicting a European man wearing a hat.
Southern New Ireland, region near central isthmus [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Appleton Sturgis, 1891.
Limestone; pigments.
H: 36; W: 12; D: 12 cm.

▸ **pl. 42**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
20725
Female figure carved in limestone (chalk), depicted holding a fish in front of her body.
Southern New Ireland, west coast Barok or Sokirik region, Kures village [published registration data].
Collected in New Ireland, probably 1899. Given by Rudolf von Bennigsen, Gouverneur of Kaiser Wilhelmsland (German New Guinea), 1901.
Limestone; red and blue pigments.
H: 45; W: 12.5; D: 10 cm.

Links with the north

◂ IV.9

Michael Gunn

Art historians have traditionally assumed that the northern New Ireland art tradition finished with the southern limit of *malagan*, somewhere near the Lelet Plateau region. But after we had examined more than 5,000 objects from New Ireland, it became obvious that the northern New Ireland art tradition was used much further south—bark-cloth painted in the northern style was found in the Barok region,[1] and a number of different types of northern art style wooden figures were collected from around Namatanai.

The best documented of these is a figure that can be seen in a series of four photographs taken between 1904 and 1910 at the funeral of Takau at Namatanai.[2] Inside the fenced enclosure is a small display house containing an overmodeled skull in front and a painted wooden figure with attached extended ear-planks behind it. Although the style of painting is not that of northern New Ireland, the sculptural form is very similar to figures found in the northern part of New Ireland in the late 20th century (see fig. 31 and 32) .

Another group of figures takes two forms and may well be the work of one man. Stuttgart 3515 (pl. 43) is not a mask but an example of the head-only version of a figure. There are at least two other figures in the same style that stand with outstretched

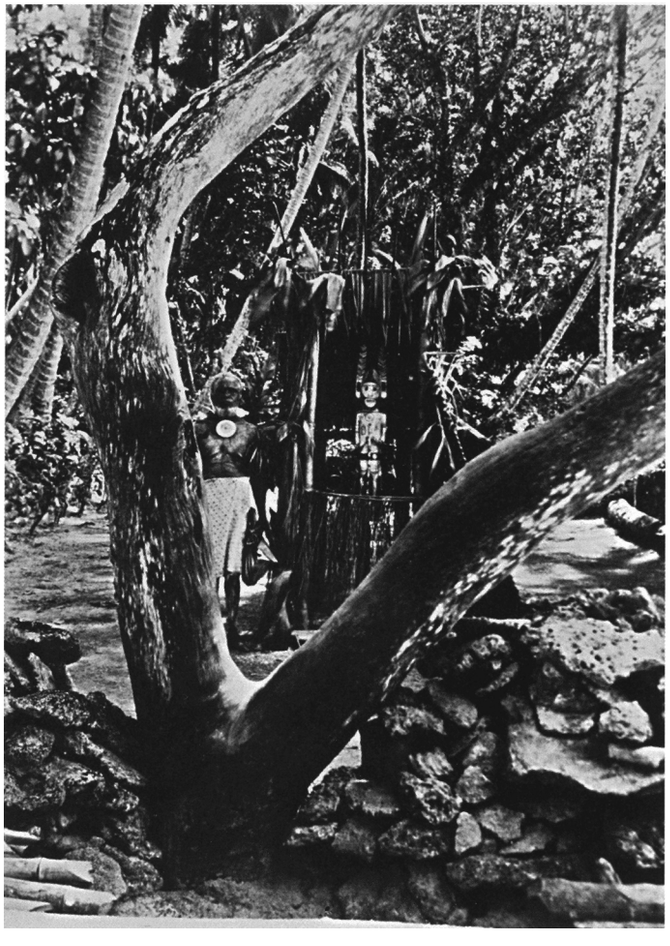


Fig. 31–32
Death ceremony for Takau in Namatanai. Overmodeled skull placed in front of *malagan*-like figure used to commemorate Takau and placed in its own display house in the enclosure. Namatanai, Patpatar region, central New Ireland, probably in 1907–1909.
Collection Wostrack.

arms and have a liver depicted under the ribs—a feature often found on figures in the *malagan* traditions of the north.

A third type of wooden figure is an image of a crouching woman (see pl. 44) whose hands are positioned to either side of her face. In this example, the influence of the northern art style can be seen in the portrayal of her eyes, whereas the naturalistic posture is clearly non-northern.

It is not known whether these figures were carved by men who had visited northern New Ireland and brought aspects of the style back to central New Ireland, or if they were made by men who were from the north and moved when they married women from the central region. The third possibility is that there has been a long tradition in this region of honoring the dead by using an art style closely related to that of the north, but there is no evidence of any apprenticeship system for artists operating in the isthmus region as was found in the region north of the Lelet Plateau and on Tabar.

Other examples of figure sculpture from this region exist in museum collections, but their art style is clearly non-northern and are dealt with in sections IV.7. and IV.8.

1. See section II.3.

2. These photographs of Takau's funeral were part of the collection of Wilhelm Wostrack, the first leader of the German government station at Namatanai 1904–1910, and are now in the Linden-Museum Stuttgart.

◂ **pl. 43**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
3515
Painted wooden head with tall integrated ear-planks; a small number of similar heads and related painted wooden figures are known from the Namatanai region in the late 19th to early 20th century.
Central New Ireland, Namatanai region [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln, before 1900.
Wood; lime, red ochre, black pigment; shell, rootlets, bark-cloth, leaf material, other plant material.
H: 85; W: 28; D: 26 cm.

▸ **pl. 44**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 37618
Wooden figure in the form of a crouching woman, carved and painted in a style that is related to the main northern art tradition.
Central New Ireland, Namatanai region [original field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Richard Thurnwald, c. 1907.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, black-grey and red pigments; fiber, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*); iron nails, iron spike.
H: 76; W: 32; D: 32 cm.

Ephemeral art

◂ IV.10

Antje Denner

Next to masks and wooden and stone figures, New Irelanders created objects that fall under the category art and aesthetics but which are rarely seen in museum collections because the materials they are made of are perishable, thus making collection and preservation difficult, if not impossible. These works include fragile dance regalia, headdresses, as well as dance ornaments made of flowers, fragrant leaves, and feathers, and body decorations.

The reports by the missionary Neuhaus on objects, performances, and ritual installations of various secret societies among the Patpatar of central New Ireland are highly informative in this respect.[1] Members of the *uokuok* society, for example, employed different headdresses for a dance that went by the generic name of *man*, which otherwise is a collective term for birds and flying foxes. The individual headdresses were named after certain plants such as "beach daffodil," "bamboo shoot," "pandanus fruit," or "orchid seed." These materials were either used directly for manufacture or else the terms refer to ideas related to the plants represented in the headdress.

The members of the *kipkipto* society prepared their masks at secluded sites in the bush. For one of the masks, the men used bird's-nest ferns and their entangled rootstocks, which they took from the tree, hollowed out and into which they inserted eyes with rings around them made of coconut shells. The fern-fronds provided the hair for the mask, which was painted and topped with a feather tuft. The mask was worn over the head and hung down over the masker's shoulders. Another mask—showing Gilam, a bush spirit who has hair made of cane—was made from the hollowed-out fruit of a special vine. For the performance called *bokiu*, "dolphin,"[2] bark covers were used for the dancer's torso that showed the image of a fish's mouth at the front. During the initiation ceremony of the *lagulagu* society, dancers performed wearing grass masks that consisted of long blades of a special grass and white flower spikes.

Many different plant materials were used for making figures that represented the founders of secret societies or manifestations from the plant or animal world that were associated with them. We also know of several secret societies that created ritual scenes showing birds and their nests filled with eggs. The bird figures were made of wood, or else of bark or *paragum*.[3] Several societies used to create a scene called *hiruo*.[4] It consisted of the effigies of a man or a woman whose bodies were made of bark or the hollow stem of a banana tree, with hair made of ferns, mosses, or roots. Their hands were made of sticks or branches, while the liver was represented by the fruit of a tree. The hollow figure was filled with delicacies such as nuts or fruits, which were distributed and consumed after the scene had been revealed.

The above-mentioned *paragum* tubers were employed by the men of the *kamrakrak* society for a variety of scenes. They were carved into anthropomorphic figures and painted colorfully. In one of the scenes documented by Neuhaus, two such effigies were placed between walls made of vines. In the middle, the walls were fashioned in latticework and embellished with rounded arches and floral garlands. In another scene,

1. The following description is based on Neuhaus 1962: 344-435 and Neuhaus n.d. Neuhaus worked in Namatanai as a missionary for many years. The data he collected between 1910 and 1928 has been confirmed and complemented by a number of other studies, see Krämer-Bannow 1916: 50-51; Wagner 1986: 121-145; Kingston 1998: chapter 4; and Denner 2002, 2003.

2. Neuhaus gives pigfish (1962: 431) and dolphin (n.d.: 24) for *bokiu*. However, the term could also refer to a shark: on Nissan there exists a *tedak*-sub-type that is called *bakwe* (shark), and on Anir there is a performance for which headdresses and masks are used that go by the name of *bakou* (shark).

3. A kind of taro, *alocasia indica*.

4. *Hiruo*: "the slain, a person killed in battle" (Neuhaus n.d.: 113).

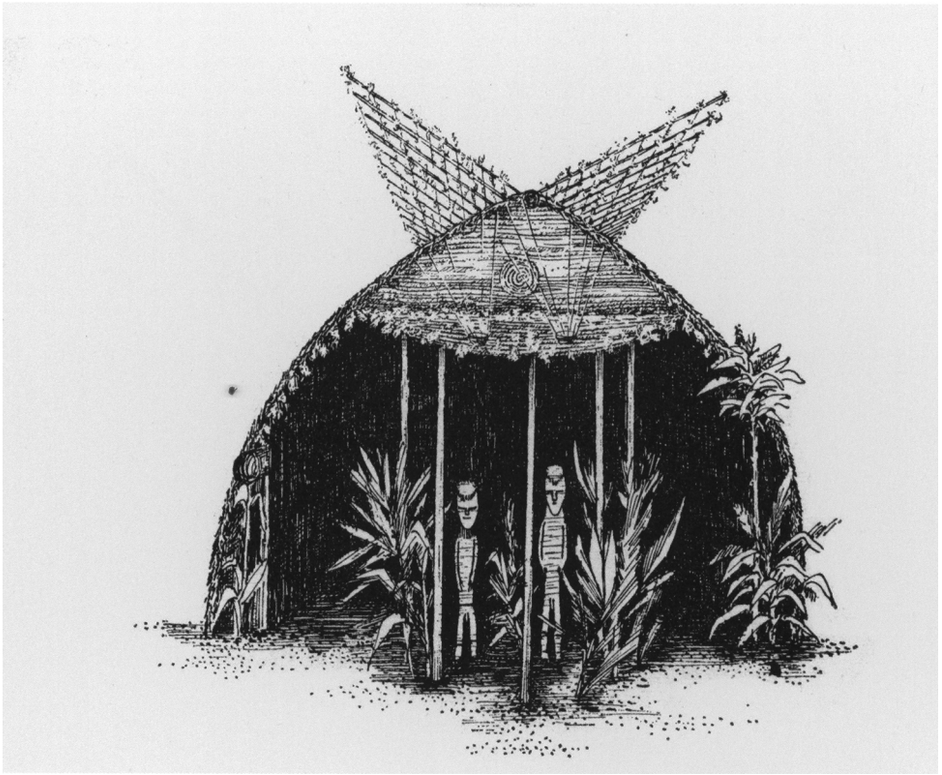


Fig. 33
Sketch of the cult scene *a hala sik* (the little house) of the *kor* society.
[From Neuhaus 1962, *Beiträge zur Ethnographie der Pala, Mittel Neu Irland*, p. 380, Abb. 5; sketch by R. Hiltbrand.]

called *liliebang*, the *paragum* figure was said to represent a *hinakulkulie*, a type of female pixie, who preferably lives in hollow trees called *liliebang*.

The *liliebang* tree was also part of a scene created by the *kor* society. For this scene the men built a tower with a conical tip made from the little sticks of a special type of bamboo and a rectangular annex that was decorated with fragrant ferns. Inside the annex the men placed a roasted pig, which was only shown to the initiates after the name of the scene had been revealed. Probably the most significant ritual installation of the *kor* society was called *a hala sik*, which Neuhaus translated as "little house." According to his Patpatar dictionary, the term could also be translated as the "house of dirges."[5] The scene actually formed the visual transfiguration of a myth of origin, according to which the society once used to be in possession of the *tabarane*, the spirits of the dead. When at one time a "bush woman from Misoka"[6] was in the process of initiating her two children and a number of other *tabarane*, a man dreamt of the whole initiation scene and decided thereafter to introduce the society and the initiation, including the ritual installation, to the world of humans. The scene witnessed by Neuhaus in 1919 consisted of a small house, open at the front and with a vaulted roof that reached to the ground and was covered with fruit garlands from a special palm. The inside walls were lined with bark and decorated with plant fibers and aromatic fern garlands. On the canopy there were two coconuts, which had sticks inserted into them—the so-called "eyes of the house" with lashes—and in front of it there hung a disc that represented the moon. The rafters, which protruded from the roof, were tied together with feather strings, creating the impression of two wings, which is why this element was called *malaba*, "sea

5. Neuhaus n.d.: 68, 294.
6. Duke of York Islands, Neuhaus 1962: 375.

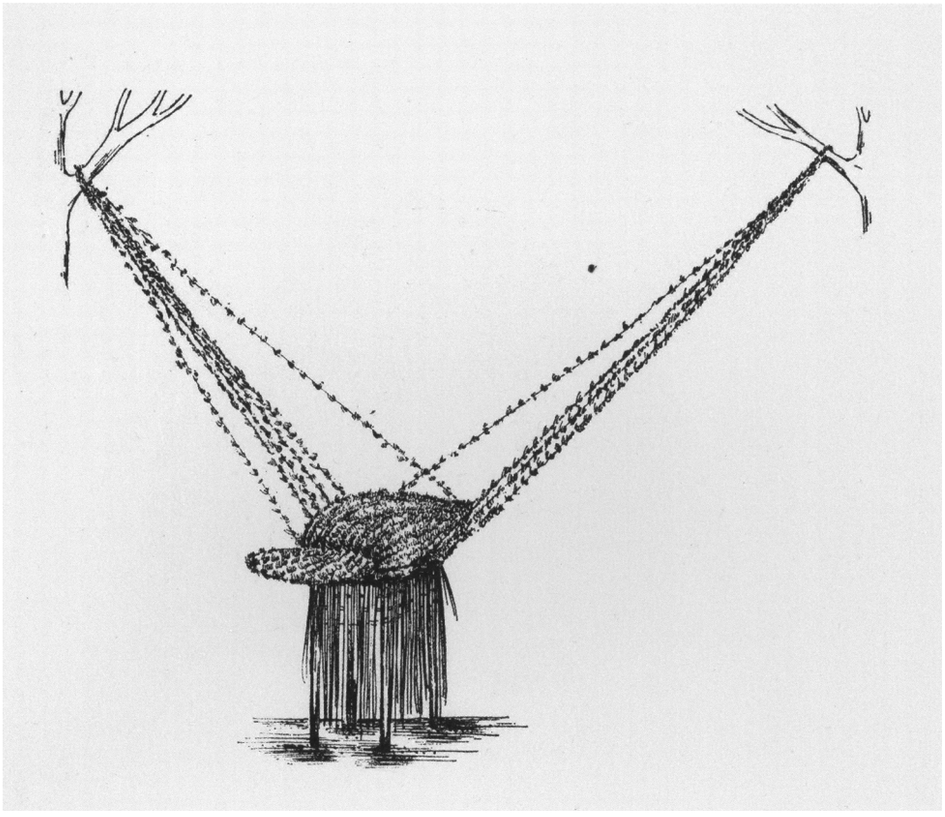


Fig. 34
Sketch of the cult scene *a malaba* (the great sea eagle) of the *kor* society.
[From Neuhaus 1962, *Beiträge zur Ethnographie der Pala, Mittel Neu Irland,* p. 391, Abb. 21; sketch by R. Hiltbrand.]

eagle." Under the canopy stood two wooden figures, the "children of the bush woman" and on the ridge of the house there was a third figure showing the man who, in the myth, had dreamt about the initiation. Inside the house two little, sugarloaf-shaped huts had been erected in which two *kor* men, again representing the sons of the bush woman, were hiding and making mysterious noises. The fig tree on which, according to the myth, the initiation hut had been built, was represented in the installation by a tree that had been planted beside the house and on which a man was dancing. What is impressive about the whole scene is the elaborate manner in which the actual display house had been furnished—a feature that is characteristic of many other ritual installations too.

In many of these scenes different kinds of ritual food play an important part. Here are just a few representative examples: for the *malaba* ("sea eagle") installation a large bird figure was constructed of bamboo slats and feather strings, into which was placed a complete roasted pig. For *biar*, (the "ruff") the men shaped the ends of bamboo poles into heads of snakes and placed them on forked sticks. Into apertures made at the top end the men placed various foodstuffs such as breadfruit, pork, and yams. Then the openings were closed again and the bamboos draped with ruffs, which were used later as dance ornaments and then distributed to the initiates. For *mata na kasakes*, the "sun disc," radiating bamboo arcs were placed in a circle and the center was then filled with melons, coconuts, and other fruits. Coconuts, together with perfumed leaf bundles, were also attached to the arcs. This kind of aesthetic preparation of special foods and delicacies and their subsequent, quasi

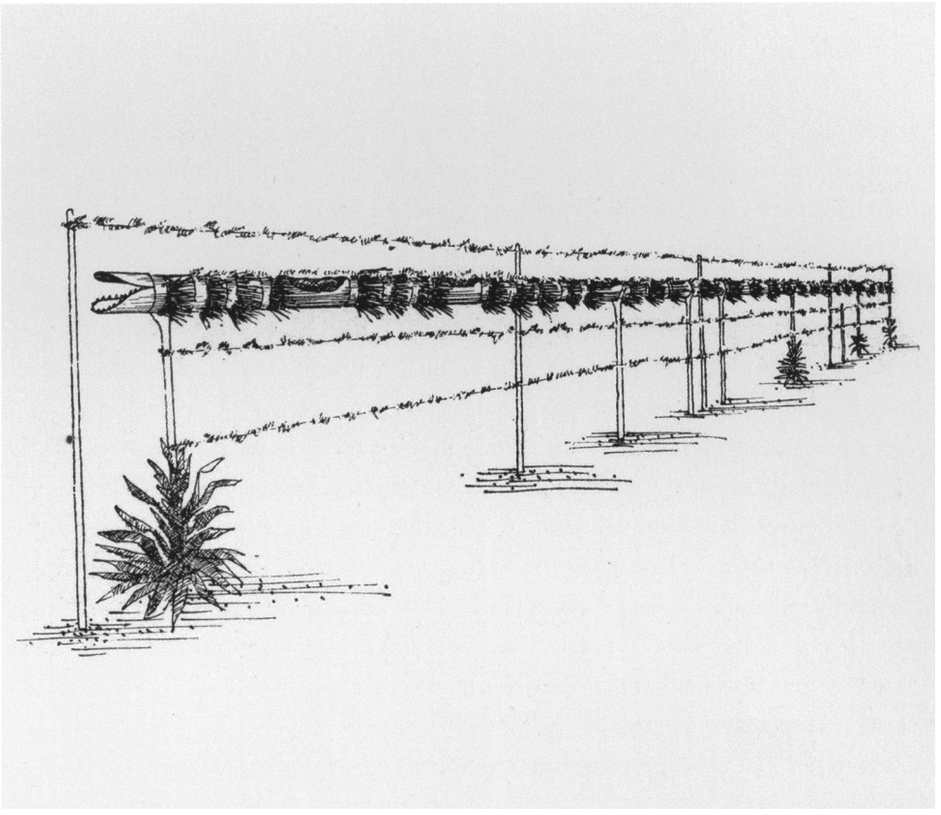


Fig. 35
Sketch of the cult scene *a biar* (the ruff) of the *kor* society.
[From Neuhaus 1962, *Beiträge zur Ethnographie der Pala, Mittel Neu Irland*, p. 386, Abb. 13; sketch by R. Hiltbrand.]

wondrous, revelation goes to show what significance ritual foods were granted. Not surprisingly, Wagner includes them in the category of esoteric knowledge and cogently calls them "culinary" secrets or revelations respectively.[7] They provide a further example of the kind of aesthetic appreciation New Irelanders display in so many spheres of life.

7. Wagner 1986: 125.

Kabai

Michael Gunn

The term *kabai* is best known from the Barok region, where it refers to a custom or traditional feast sequence. It is structured much like *malagan*, but without the painted wooden art-works that have made *malagan* so well known.

At the center of the feast is a table made from a shallow-rooted tree, which is lopped at about 3 meters above the ground, dug up, has its roots trimmed in a circle, and is placed upside down in the middle of the village. There it becomes the focus of the *kabai* ceremony as a root table. During *kabai* the root table is surrounded by railings and freshly killed pigs; taro and other foods are placed around it on a series of platforms.

As a ceremonial sequence, *kabai* is primarily used to cover up the names of all the dead of all the clans in the region over a period of time. "Covering up all the names" means that people will finish all the legal and other issues left outstanding when a person died. The person's place within the clan is finally removed from that of the living and transformed to the more nebulous world of an ancestor. Cultural property belonging to the clan is taken out, reassessed, and renewed. In some regions *vovo* stone figures were taken out, repainted, and passed on to the next generation within the clan, for they are considered to be part of the assets of the clan.

Kabai is also the time they can work a women's taboo house, called *dawan* in the west coast Barok region. Working a women's taboo house means that a group of young women, the firstborn in each family, are confined to their taboo house for a while and taught their responsibilities as clan leaders. During *kabai* they are re-introduced to society and placed on seats surrounding the root table—positioned as if they were fruits hanging from the inverted tree.[1]

Root tables are known on the west coast from the narrow isthmus region of central New Ireland, where in the past the bodies of killed enemies were suspended from the root branches before they were eaten.[2] Root tables are also known farther north on the east coast of the Madak region where they were used in association with *malagan* and with girls being released from their taboo house.[3] On the Lelet Plateau they were used in ritual context, and rub drums (called *livika* or *lunuat* in this region) were played on top of them.[4] In other parts of northern New Ireland the rub drums were used in particular types of *malagan* ceremony. On Tabar, root tables were known as *kabai* and used as food platforms up until the early 20th century,[5] but under what context is not clear. Today a *kabai* on Tabar is a tree trunk that is permanently placed in the *malagan* ritual site so that it resembles a tree that has died in place. In the 19th century the bodies of enemies were hung from the tree trunks prior to being eaten. Often Y-shaped, these tree trunks were probably originally used as entrance stiles to men's house enclosures. They are known from the Barok, Madak, Notsi, and Tabar regions and are still treated with respect, often referred to as village anchors.

1. Wagner 1987: 60.
2. Krämer-Bannow 1916: 163, 177, 279.
3. Krämer-Bannow 1916: 205-12; Krämer 1925: 24-26, 55-56; Wagner 1986, 1987.
4. Krämer-Bannow 1916: 279.
5. Lamers 1928–1938.

Fig. 36
Root table, the trunk featured a carved image of a female shark. West coast Patpatar Sokirik region, Raher village, March 1909.
Photo taken by a member of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

Art and Ritual

Islands off the East Coast of New Ireland

pl. 50 (detail, see p. 158)

Links with the south—Nissan Island

Antje Denner

The Green Island group consists of two atolls: Pinipel and Nissan. Due to their position—southeast of Anir and northwest of Buka—some early geographers classed them as part of the Bismarck Archipelago, others of the Solomon Islands. Ethnographers, on their part, were more interested in cultural allocation and—on the basis of their research—they considered them as belonging to the northern Solomons, while noting the strong cultural influence from New Ireland at the same time.[1] Parkinson observed that this influence was especially apparent where masks were concerned. In his view, they were distinctly finer and more elaborate than those produced on Buka and Bougainville.[2]

Taking the masks in museum collections that are documented as being from Nissan, one can distinguish between six types on the basis of formal criteria. The first type includes the two masks shown in the exhibition (see pl. 45 and 46). In regard to form and design, they come closest to the New Ireland masks. The majority of masks known from collections and the early literature belong to the second category. They display the same basic structural form as the first type—bark-cloth over a frame—but the facial part is overmodeled with a dark substance (probably putty from *Parinarium laurinum*). The chin tapers sharply and the mask is topped by a conical attachment that is usually covered with plant fibers or human hair, forming a structural antipole to the pronounced chin. On both sides, round or rectangular wooden ear-planks are inserted. The facial features are accentuated plastically and painted colorfully. This mask type divides into a whole set of sub-categories.[3] The third type is represented by two slim, elongated masks with tapering tops and lower ends. They have thin noses and only slightly raised lips. The paint is applied directly to the bark-cloth, with the color white clearly dominating.[4] With regard to form, these tall, or elongated and thin-looking masks show parallels with the *fiu* masks of Anir. The fourth type comprises masks, the faces of which are made of wood and decorated with designs imitating facial

1. See for example Parkinson 1898; Krause 1906: 46-47.

2. Parkinson 1898: 12, 1907: 656.

3. See for example Foy 1900 and Sarfert 1913.

4. Both these masks are in the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin. The mask VI 18625 is decorated with a herringbone design radiating from the center of the face. The same motif is found on a mask of the second type (see Sarfert 1913: Taf. 10, Nr. 8). This latter one has lancet-shaped, upward-pointing extensions in place of ears and at the center of the forehead—a characteristic feature also to be seen on the second mask of the third type.

scarifications. Parkinson was the first to describe these masks.[5] According to him, the masks wore a wig of human hair in a hairstyle that was typical of the region. The only wooden mask found in a collection was published by Sarfert.[6] The facial design fits Parkinson's description but the hair is made of plant fibers and is styled in a crest-like fashion typical of New Ireland, which is why Sarfert suspects that this specimen was probably "recently introduced from Neu-Mecklenburg." The fifth type is described by Nachman. These masks are called *pinpindik* and are made of sago-leaf ribs and feature "a large nose, round eyes and a white, gaping mouth."[7] The sixth type is represented by a mask in the museum in Vienna.[8] Taking the painting and the small chin plate as a gauge, this mask comes close to the masks of Buka in regard to style.[9]

Unfortunately we know very little about the use, the function, and the meaning of the masks of Nissan. Nearly all the authors who have written on the masks in recent decades rely on Parkinson.[10] Parkinson starts off with a description of the masks of Nissan (and Bougainville) but notes a little later that "the Nissan masks are also common to Buka, but are a little different in form." He goes on to describe their function and meaning but his description is based not on information that he collected on Nissan, but to a large extent from Buka islanders whom he interviewed in Ralum, a plantation in New Britain. According to his informants, the masks belonged to the sphere of secret male societies and were manufactured during initiation at secluded sites, called *talohu*, hidden away in the bush. Women and non-initiates were told that they represented the spirit Kokorra. In the literature, the term *kokorra* refers mainly to an anthropomorphic motif found on numerous objects (paddles, boats, dance clubs, etc.) in the northern Solomon Islands, including Nissan.[11] However, in view of Parkinson's rather questionable source of data it remains doubtful whether the masks collected on Nissan really were used in initiations and associated with a spirit being called Kokorra.[12] Even Krause, who is relying on information he received from the plantation owners Sorge and Uhlig, is doubtful whether a link existed with the *kokorra* ceremonies of Buka and Bougainville, since neither political nor religious societies of any kind had ever been observed on Nissan. According to Krause, masks were employed in dances in the context of harvest feasts.[13]

This corresponds with Nachman's observations during research conducted on Nissan in the early 1970s.[14] According to him, the generic term for mask on Nissan is *tadak*. Masks make their appearance in gardens where the crops are being grown that will be used for the feast in the context of a mortuary ceremony.[15] Manufacturing the masks is men's business and is done in secrecy. The masks are associated with bush spirits and are taboo to women and children. The feast organizer commissions a *tadak* performance but does not take part himself in the manufacture of the masks. The maskers gather in the feast organizer's men's house and then proceed to the gardens where they surprise the men and women working there and carry out mock attacks, using bows and arrows, spears, clubs, and other weapons. This is repeated several times in the days and weeks to come. According to Nachman, the people react to these performances with both laughter and awe, which reflects the ambiguous nature of the masks. They are threatening and comical at the same time, and the people regard the events as both serious and entertaining. Nachman's informants claimed that the masks drove the

5. Parkinson 1898: 10, 1907: 656.

6. Sarfert 1913: 340, Taf. 11, Nr. 8.

7. Nachman 1978: 269. *Pinpindik* is also the name of a dance in southern New Ireland for which no masks are used.

8. Inv. Nr. 66.256 in the Museum für Völkerkunde Wien, see Moschner 1967: Taf. 19.

9. For Buka masks see Foy 1900: Taf. XVII. Carlier 2002 (no. 80) published a mask which is said to be from Nissan but looks very much like the Buka masks. Possibly it was brought to Nissan from Buka, or made by a Buka islander on Nissan.

10. Parkinson 1898: 10-12. Nissan masks were published by: Bodrogi 1959: Fig. 111; Carlier 2002: No. 80, 81; Foy 1900: Taf. XVI; Hewicker & Tischner 1954: Taf. 59; Koch 1969: 90; Krause 1906: 151; Lommel 1970: Abb. 42; Meyer 1995: No. 425; Moschner 1967: Taf. 19; Newton et al. 1979: No. 15.1; Nicolas 2000: No. 95; Parkinson 1907: Abb. 125; Sarfert 1913; Taf. 11; Schmeltz 1899: Taf. XIV, XVI; Schmitz 1969: Color-pl. 42; Stöhr 1987: Abb. 227 and catalogue no. 334; Waite 1983: Plate I.

11. This figure's hairstyle is likened to the initiation headdresses used on Buka and Bougainville, see Blackwood 1935: 194-196; Kaeppler, Kaufmann and Newton 1994: 558-559.

12. Although Parkinson referred to six masks he collected for the Völkerkundemuseum Berlin as *kokorra* (Krause 1906: 149) it remains unclear whether they were given the name while collecting the masks on Nissan or whether he assigned this name to them on the basis of his research among Buka islanders.

13. Krause 1906: 66, 149.

14. Nachman 1978: 261-268.

15. Nachman 1978: 103 mentions that an initiation called *welsauor* was practiced up to the early 20th century but that no masks were used in this case.

people to work harder and faster; some also noted that they were effective in warding off sorcery attacks planned by envious competitors. After the performances, and after the feast is over, the *tadak* masks are thrown into the sea at a particular spot. Every village has a special location of its own on the reef, which is looked upon as a funeral site for the *tadak* masks.

Nachman also lists some of the names used for the various sub-types of *tadak*: *pateki* is the main mask, or leader, *penan* is "*pateki*'s wife," and *kokorra* "*pateki*'s assistant." All the other masks rank as "*pateki*'s workers." Among them are names taken from various animals: *bakwe* (shark), *mustorik* (bat), *mambu* (turtle), *mir* (a type of fish), but also *lakok* (skull), *liowanaroke* (a bush spirit), as well as *polisboi* (policeman), and *dukduk* (a conical mask found in New Ireland and New Britain). Nachman maintained that it was not possible to assign these types to historical masks from European museums by comparing them with photographs. He puts this down to changing fashions in the past and individual preferences, which had led to rapid changes in style, making identification an impossible task for his informants. Possibly this also helps to explain the use of the term *kokorra*. Probably only the name was imported from Buka but not the *kokorra* cult itself. We may assume that this also applies to the sub-type called *dukduk*.

With regard to terminology and usage, the masks of Nissan show many and very close similarities with Anir, thus underpinning Parkinson's assumption mentioned above that the masks of Nissan reflect the close ties the island has with New Ireland. This is basically correct in regard to context, usage, and communicated meaning but it does not hold for the formal aspects of design and manufacture.

◂ **pl. 45**
Germany, Leipzig, Museum für Völkerkunde.
Me 10136
Painted mask made from bark and attached rootlets.
Northern Solomon Islands archipelago,
Nissan Island [published registration data].
Collection date in Nissan not known.
Given by Captain Karl Nauer, 1911.
Bark-cloth, wood, bamboo, fiber, tree fungi,
adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), rootlets;
lime, red and black pigments.
H: 65; W: 34; D: 35 cm.

▸ **pl. 46**
Germany, Bremen, Übersee Museum.
D 13275
Painted mask made from bark and attached rootlets.
Northern Solomon Islands archipelago,
Nissan Island [registration data].
Collection date on Nissan not known;
probably late 19th to early 20th century.
Bark-cloth, wood, bamboo, adhesive putty
(*Parinarium laurinum*), rootlets; red, white,
and black pigments; fiber.
H: 65; W: 35; D: 35 cm.

The islands of Anir and Tanga

◂ V.2

Antje Denner

The island groups of Anir (or Feni) and Tanga are very similar in terms of language and culture and maintain close ritual ties and marriage links. There are very few historical sources that could tell us something about the art forms that existed around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, since, with the exception of F. L. S. Bell, no long-term anthropological research was carried out on either of the islands prior to the 1980s. More recent studies show that the large majority of art-works are produced in the context of extensive feasts, called *alal fafasu* on Anir and *arer sigit* on Tanga, that mark the climax, and the end, of a commemorative cycle and which are highlighted by the construction of a new men's house. The feast is staged by a lineage or men's house community respectively under the guidance of its new leader in honor of the deceased predecessor and possibly of other members of the community who have passed away.

The only mask form[1] from Anir referred to in the early literature is a goggle-like mask with a long fiber beard.[2] At the beginning of the 20th century, several museums were offered masks from Anir and Tanga that went by the generic name of *tedak*. These masks consist of a basket woven of palm leaves with a cane frame that is covered with bark-cloth. The eyes, the ears, and the mouth are made of various plant materials and are attached to the basic structure later. Many of the masks are topped with a shock of hair, but their most characteristic feature is a markedly protruding chin plate.[3] All the masks are painted and worn with a long bark-cloth costume.

According to Parkinson, the *tedak* masks of Tanga were manufactured in a secluded hut in the bush by men who were known as *anterere*. Women and children were forbidden to see them before they made their public appearance, since the masks were believed to be the personifications of spirits.[4] Parkinson goes on to say that the performances were not staged in honor of the deceased but during harvest feasts. The view that the masks represented spirits and that the *tedak's* function was to stimulate fertility[5] was not fully shared by my Anir assistants in 2000 and 2001–2002. According to them, these masks are only vaguely associated with bush spirits, and if so, only with harmless species. Their main task is to entertain. *Tedak* performances are staged in the weeks leading up to the *alal fafasu* in the gardens where the yam for the feast is being grown and where the mask figures carry out mock attacks on the men and women working there. Immediately prior to the feast they make one last appearance in the village itself.

The *tedak* masks divide into several sub-categories: the first to make their appearance in the preparatory stages of an *alal fafasu* are the *ngak* (see pl. 49)[6] and *paklun siksikbor* masks, which are rounder in shape and have smaller ears.[7] They are not overtly aggressive, preferring to beg for food, betel nut, or tobacco, before the "real *tedak*" step onto the scene. These include the masks *solis*, *tunbes*, *toromalailai*, *kermelululu*, and *sikin maket* and are distinguished by their elongated, pointed heads, long ears, and far-protruding chin plates. The maskers carry implements such as sticks, knives, throwing-sticks, and barbed vines with which they chase the people and try to inflict harmless wounds, or steal their bags and rip off their clothes. Each mask type has its own insignia and behaves in a distinctive manner. *Sikin maket*, the "fisherman," for example, carries a fishing rod and a net and imitates the typical move-

1. On other art forms of these islands see III.2, IV.6, and IV.7.

2. Parkinson 1907: 654.

3. There exist a number of *tedak* masks that do not have this chin plate.

4. Parkinson 1907: 653-654.

5. Gunn 1997: 72.

6. In this case and the following ones the classification of masks held in museum collections according to *tedak* sub-types was done by informants on Anir in 2000 and 2001–2002.

7. They resemble the so-called *nguf* mask that was used in the *sokopana* initiation (Bell 1935: Pl. XXII, Fig. 2a). However, members of the *sokopana* society from Anir, Tanga, and the Konomala area that I questioned on Anir in 2001 and 2002 stated that this society did not produce masks.

Fig. 37
Patrik Liting wearing a *tedak* mask of the sub-type *tunbes*. The mask was made by Alois Katkat and Joacim Tokas from Warambana village, Ambitlei Island, Anir, in June–July 2002, for the Museum der Kulturen, Basel.
Photo taken by Antje Denner.

ments of fishing. The painting on the mask shows a stylized frigate bird. The *tunbes* mask (see pl. 48) is armed with a knife. This mask also performs in other contexts, for instance when children are subjected to collective punishment, or in conflict situations. In this case, a man would send a *tunbes* to the hamlet of his adversary where he would inflict cuts with a knife on the person in question, indicating thereby that the former felt that he was being wrongly accused. Two other *tedak* masks, *paklun pul* and *puk fiu*, are also special in their own way. *Paklun pul*, "dog's head," is the only mask that is associated with an animal. Instead of a chin plate, the mask is equipped with a dog's snout and during his performance the masker imitates a dog. On the ideational level, this type is likened to other mask forms representing a variety of animals such as pigs or sharks. These latter masks are made of the same material but they are not classified as *tedak* masks.

Puk fiu is the only *tedak* mask to be associated with spiritual beings, namely a special spirit of the dead. If a person dies in battle or through an accident he becomes a *fiu*. These spirits generally rank as malicious, even though it does occur occasionally that one of them is befriended by a human and supports him thereafter. *Fiu* are pictured as having "long heads and protruding eyes that light up in the dark." They have "sharp teeth and a forked tongue that hangs down from the mouth over the chin" (see pl. 47). *Fiu* can fly and they usually live high up in large trees in the bush where they hang from the branches "like flying foxes." When a man performs in a *fiu* mask he utters the cry of the *fiu* spirits "*fuk iau, fuk iau, fuk iau*" and makes rotating movements with his arms as if flying, while throwing sharpened sticks and other pointed objects at the onlookers to show them how malicious he is. *Fiu* rank as the model on which bark-cloth *tedak* masks are styled, but they may also appear in the shape of a wooden mask, in which case they perform solo.

A second type of carved wooden mask is called *kipung*. *Kipung* masks always perform in pairs, one female, the other male. They are distinguishable by the different tattoo motifs they display, i.e. typically masculine and feminine designs respectively. During an *alal fafasu*, three to ten such pairs may be seen performing dances simultaneously. The *kipung* are manufactured in seclusion but these days no special initiation takes place nor are these artworks protected by any special form of copyright. The same applies to the *tedak* masks.

◂ **Fig. 38**
Bernard Komgoi dances with a wooden *fiu* mask made by himself. Balngit village, Babase Island, Anir, October 2004.
Photo taken by Antje Denner.

▸ **pl. 47**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 12129
Bark-cloth mask with tube eyes and protruding bark-cloth tongue; probably a type of *tedak* mask called *puk fiu*.
Southern New Ireland, Caens Inseln (now Tanga Islands) [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Richard Parkinson, 1898.
Bark-cloth, bamboo, spathe or leaf, fiber, rootlets; lime, yellow, red, and black pigments.
H: 78; W: 28; D: 32 cm.

The *kipung* are no longer associated with spiritual beings or with any special form of power. According to two carvers from Anir, this was different in earlier days when *kipung* possessed the same kind of strength and potency that today are still associated with art forms that are lodged in secret societies. These include the *tubuan, dukduk, tomalanggen,* and *sangsangmat* masks, and *lor,* which on Anir and Tanga, however, does not refer to a mask but to a headdress. *Tomalanggen* and *sangsangmat* are conical masks that are similar in shape to the *tubuan* and *dukduk* but differ in terms of overall design and coloring, perform different dances and songs and are invested with very distinct features and contents of their own. One of the interesting aspects gained from discussions with informants on Anir relates to the genealogical relationships between the different secret societies. Thus, *iniet* is looked upon as the source of *kenit, sangsangmat,* and *tomalanggen. Tomalanggen* and *lor* are each defined as the "mother of *tubuan,*" while the *tubuan* itself is described as the "mother of the *dukduk* masks" which themselves bring forth children. The genealogical relationships might actually reflect the age and presence of the secret societies on Anir. Thus it is said that *tubuan* and *dukduk* were imported from Siar at some point between the First and Second World Wars. According to oral tradition, *kenit* and *lor* were also imported at some time, but no one remembers when exactly and by whom. *Sangsangmat, tomalanggen,* and *tedak* masks are said to be of Anir origin, as regards *iniet,* people just say that it is an "ancient tradition."

◂ **pl. 48**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 12131
Bark-cloth mask; probably a type of *tedak* mask known as *tunbes*.
Southern New Ireland, Caens Inseln (now Tanga Islands) [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Richard Parkinson, 1898.
Bark-cloth, wood, palm leaf, gourd, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), rootlets, cane seed burrs, other plant material; white, black, and pink-red pigments, red ochre.
H: 49; W: 22; L: 108 cm.

▸ **pl. 49**
Hungary, Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum. 54329
Bark-cloth body mask with white painted face and fan-shaped ears; probably a sub-type of the *tedak* mask, called *ngak*.
Southern New Ireland, Tanga Islands [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Giovanni Bettanin, 1904.
Bark-cloth, gourd, manufactured textile, vine, dog teeth, fiber, string; lime, pink-red and black pigments.
H: 135; W: 60; D: 70 cm.

Lihir Islands

V.3

Philippe Peltier

Lihir, with the large island of Niolam and three smaller ones—Malie, Masahet, and Mahur— is equidistant (about 40 km) from the islands of Tanga, Tabar and the north coast of New Ireland. Strangely enough, despite its pivotal position between the *malagan* complex in the north and the social forms which prevail in the Patpatar region in the south, little information is available about this small group of islands. We are forced to admit that we know nothing, or almost nothing, about these societies at the time they came into contact with the Western world.[1]

This blind spot can be explained partly by historical conditions. At the time of colonization, Lihir was known for the "savagery" of its "chiefs:" in the early 1900s, Richard Parkinson claimed that "acts of cruelty" were still frequent there, while hoping that they would soon be a thing of the past.[2] The island's isolation was also a factor. Lihir seems to have maintained sporadic relationships with the neighboring islands. Parkinson mentioned a few "colonies" on the coast of the large island,[3] and Francis Bell, (an anthropologist who worked on Tanga Island between the two wars) talked of "sporadic" canoe trips between Lihir and Tanga. Bell said that these exchanges were limited to a few family groups.[4] Yet this isolation is to be relativized. Exchanges of groups of people probably occurred because of alliances between related groups. As is often the case in Melanesia, the prestige of the head of the clan was based on his capacity to create and control trade networks in order to acquire rare goods. One of these goods was the shell money produced on Lihir. There were two types of currency: one was whitish and the other red. The red shells were the most valuable. These days, although white currency is no longer made, red money is still produced on the island of Masahet. It is known as *kemetas* and is still exported to the neighboring islands.[5]

Parkinson also mentioned funerary ceremonies for which the *malagan* were erected. The term *malagan* here is to be taken with caution, because it refers to the dances as well as to the figures although nothing very specific was said.[6]

In 2001, during a field survey in preparation for this exhibition, several people from Masahet described "carved skull holders." These sculptures were made for the *pi tutun kanut* ceremonies, an expression which may be translated as "decorating the body." In these ceremonies, a manikin (*mormor*) was made from the trunk of a banana palm and covered with vegetable fibers. Erected on the ridge pole of the men's house to which the deceased belonged, it held the skull of the dead man in whose honor the ceremony was held. The skull was not overmodeled but simply painted with lime and red ochre pigments. Several manikins could be set up on the roof of the house. At the end of the ceremony the skulls were wrapped in leaves, then put in baskets and deposited in a cave. In wartime, some of these skulls were taken out of the cave, brought to the village, unpacked and used in magic rituals to favor a successful outcome of the fighting. Although the art of warfare has long been a thing of the past, the last ceremony for which *mormor* sculptures were produced took place on the island of Mahur in 1987.[7] Ethnographic information is scanty and the museums have very few objects. No sculpture from the colonization period has come down to us. Only a few masks have survived. This almost total absence of objects can probably be explained by sporadic

1. In recent years, the opening of a gold mine has given rise to numerous studies. Most have focused on the adaptation of traditional society to the modern world. Obviously, the mine had major repercussions on society. Erosion of traditions is not a modern phenomenon but the result of a long process which began with the establishment of colonial power and the Catholic mission. Several associations are currently trying to revive a number of rituals and ceremonies. For Lihir, see the work of Martha McIntyre and Nicolas Bainton.

2. This reputation, which contained an indeterminate share of fantasy, must have prevented contacts and settlement. The Catholic mission was established on the island in the early 1930s. See Parkinson (1907) 1999; 118-119.

3. Parkinson (1907) 1999, p. 118: "Tabar and Lihir have founded colonies on the main island of New Ireland opposite, with which they are still in friendly neighbouring communication."

4. Bell 1950, p. 82: "... Voyages to Lihir are infrequent and are generally confined to the Eski, Filamat and Fasambo people living in the western end of Boeing, who claimed totemic kinship with certain natives there."

5. The little discs threaded on cords are made from a small shell which is not found in Lihir but is imported from the island of New Hanover. Field survey, note on 31 July 2001.

6. Parkinson (1907) 1999: 284. More recent testimonies simply mention large discs of basketwork made on the island of Niolam, but there is no indication whether they are ancient practices or recent imports.

7. Private information from Nicolas Bainton, who is to be thanked for his information and generosity.

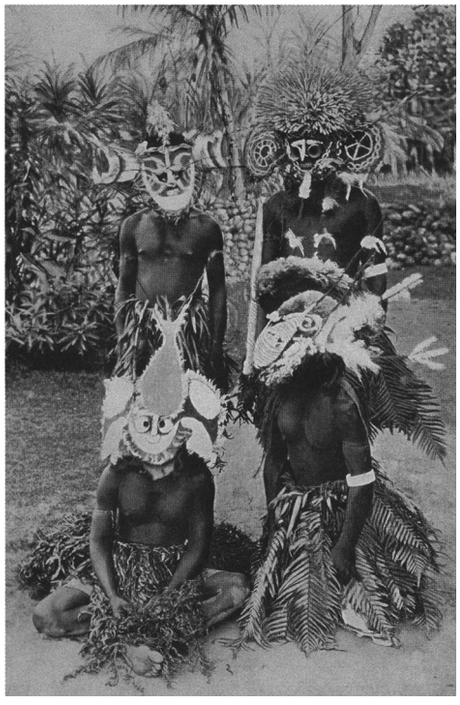


Fig. 39
Masked men from Lihir Islands.
[From Parkinson 1907, *Dreissig in der Südsee*]

contacts—few travelers stopped on the coast of Niolam and the small islands—but also because there are fewer wooden objects than ephemeral structures which are difficult to preserve. The masks in the collections testify to this fragility. They are made of pieces of plant cloth sewn on to a structure of fine sticks. This fragile base is covered with materials that are just as delicate: seeds, feathers, husks of fruit, fibers, etc. The finished masks were covered with an often thick coat of paint.

A photograph in Richard Parkinson's book shows four masks attributed to Lihir.[8] No locality is given for the photograph. Was it taken on the island itself? It seems likely. The masks are worn by men wearing skirts of *Cycas* leaves. In his text, Parkinson pointed out that these masks were very similar to those on Tabar (Gardner Island), but that they were used, as in Tanga and Anir, during rituals celebrating the end of planting or harvesting. When questioned, the people of Masahet confirmed this point, specifying that these masks mostly appeared when the breadfruit was harvested.[9]

The masks are known by the generic term of *biok*. They belong to a male society with extensive powers. One of these powers is its ability to take a part of the harvest for its members' exclusive use. These kinds of society are also known in other islands in Melanesia. As harvest time draws near, the masks are made in the bush. When the fruit has been piled up in the men's house and the men are busy preparing a fire to cook it, the masks rush into the village and steal or beg for fruit. This action is accompanied by amusing scenes, as each mask has a special name related to the role it plays in the pantomime.

The first masks to appear in the village are called *pi*. They may be male or female. The male masks are aggressive. Armed with sticks, they chase away the people busy cooking the fruit. The female masks play on seduction as well as aggression. As is often the case, the masquerades are a mixture of serious, sometimes violent acts and entertainment. The entertainers are the *gizgiz* masks. The *gizgiz* is described as a mask that "clowns about" and tickles people. It has a long nose and big ears.[10] The *bekbek* masks dash about, probably stealing fruit. In this, they imitate the little bats of the same name, which flit about the gardens eating the fruit.

Although the roles of each mask seem well established, interpreting their shapes is more hazardous. During the field study, various informants attributed the same masks to different functions. So, although the majority of informants agreed that Paris 72.1972.2.3 (pl. 50) was a pi mask and that the mask in the Barbier collection[11] was a female version of it (because of its earring), Paris 72.1983.2.1 (pl. 51) was recognized either as a gizgiz or as a bekbek mask. As often happens in New Ireland, reality escapes rigid classification. Each island, and probably each village, attributes different functions to identical forms.

These masks made of *tapa* belong to a broader group of objects made from plant-cloth which, to restrict ourselves to this part of Melanesia, are found as far afield as the Huon Gulf. They all appear in harvest rituals.[12] However, they must not be confused with the lightweight conical masks usually covered with painted cobwebs which belong to the secret societies in Vanuatu. It is fair to think that the materials are as important as the shapes. While the use of beaten bark is common, that of more sophisticated materials is governed by a right of use linked to a manufacturing secret and symbolic references which are never made public.

8. Parkinson [1907] 1999: 339, Pl. 50.

9. Field survey, July 2001. The masks are no longer made on the island of Niolam; they are still used on the little island of Masahet and probably Mahur.

10. Several informants gave names to the masks kept in the collections during a mission to Lihir in 2001. These attributions need to be taken with caution, because the information collected does not always correspond, especially for the *bekbek* and *gizgiz* masks.

11. Genève, Musée Barbier-Mueller, BMG 4310-b.

12. For the use of these masks on Tanga, Anir and Nissan see the articles by Antje Denner in this catalogue.

▾ **pl. 50**
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
72.1972.2.3
Bark-cloth harvest mask with four large bark-cloth ears; probably a male version of the type of mask called *pi*. Such masks were aggressive; armed with sticks they drove out people who were occupied with cooking breadfruit.
Central New Ireland, Lihir Islands [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired 1972.
Bark-cloth, wood, fiber, leaf, resinous material, seeds (Jobs tears), rootlets, gourd shells, feathers, twine, glue, other plant material, beeswax; pink-purple-red, white, and black pigments.
H: 66; W: 73; D: 44 cm.

▸ **pl. 51**
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
72.1983.2.1
Bark-cloth harvest mask with two large bark-cloth ears and long pendulous wooden nose; possibly the type known as *gizgiz*, or another called *bekbek*. *Gizgiz* acts the clown and tickles people; *bekbek* imitates a small bat and steals breadfruit.
Central New Ireland, Lihir Islands [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland by the Hiltrup Mission, before 1900. Acquired 1983.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), bamboo, bark-cloth, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*); pigments; burrs, red seeds (*Adenathera pavonina*), pearl shell, shell (*Turbo petholatus*), leaf material, vine, bivalve shell, sponge-like substance, knitting wool, manufactured textile.
H: 87; W: 61; D: 37 cm.

Tabar Islands

◂ V.4

Michael Gunn

Tabar has long been acknowledged as the source of the ritual traditions of *malagan* that have made New Ireland so remarkable to people with an interest in Oceanic art. The origins of *malagan* are not known, but the archaic language used in some of the songs sung during *malagan* ceremonies indicates that this cultural tradition is very ancient, at least hundreds and perhaps thousands of years old.

The art tradition associated with *malagan* may have equally long roots. The first recorded image of this tradition was made on 6 April 1643 when Isaac Gilsemans, merchant and artist on Abel Tasman's ship *Zeehaen*, sketched a shark-hunting canoe[1] and its occupants when it was sighted off the coast of Tabar as they sailed between Tabar and the mainland of New Ireland.[2] The finials depicted on the canoe are in the unique northern New Ireland style, and the hair of the men closely resembles the style of the helmet used on *tatanua* masks collected 250 years later from the northern part of the mainland, as well as on stone figures found in the Barok and Patpatar regions. Tasman and his crew were not the first Europeans in this region, for in June 1616 Jacob Le Maire and Willem Corneliszoon Schouten passed through on their ship *Eendracht*. When they were off the coast of Tabar they were approached by eight canoes and attacked with sling stones by fierce warriors. The Dutch retaliated with muskets and cannon. They must have left a strong impression, for the Tabar people in canoes who approached Tasman's ship 27 years later were unarmed and described as quite shy.[3]

The Tabar Islands are located 40 km to the north of the east coast of New Ireland and consist of three main islands—Simberi, Tatau, and Big Tabar. Although there is a strong dialect chain running north-south through this island group, the people living there all speak one language, which they call Madara.[4] Their language is most closely related to Notsi on the mainland and to Lihir, the island group to the southeast of Tabar.[5] Interestingly, the people of Tabar share many *malagan* ritual connections with the people of the Notsi region, but not with Lihir. Tabar connections with Lihir are much more apparent in the *masalai* links of kinship, for they share a number of sharks in common.[6]

When I first traveled to Tabar in 1982 to begin documentation of the *malagan* traditions of that island group, it was not entirely clear to me why Tabar was said to be the source of so many of the *malagan* sub-traditions used on the mainland.[7] By 1984 the people on Tabar had told me details of almost 400 *malagan* rights that were grouped within 21 different sub-traditions of *malagan*. Many more rights were owned by people whom I was unable to meet for one reason or another. Each set of *malagan* rights contained the prescription to make a *malagan* object—a mask, figure, display platform, or even an entire *malagan* display house. Each *malagan* owner possessed the rights to recreate at least one *malagan* object. Some people owned 10 or more such rights. The potential reservoir of ritual objects on Tabar is enormous, even though the population of Tabar is around 3,000, a large proportion of whom are under 10 years of age.

Tabar can be understood as a vast container of ritual ideas that the people have inherited from their ancestors. It is an island group full of people who transfer their ritual property from one generation to the next through the display of ritual objects

1. Several people from Tabar have identified the canoe portrayed by Gilsemans in 1643 as a shark-hunting canoe of the type called *katir* on Tabar. The man to the left is blowing a shell horn (*tavuri*), which is used in shark hunting to signal to those ashore how many sharks have been caught. Two propeller-shaped shark-catching implements (*kat*) are depicted in this engraving.

2. During this voyage Tasman gave the name Gardenys to Lihir Island and Visschers to Tabar. Gardenys was named for Arent Gardenys, a high official in the East India Company (V.O.C.) and Visschers was most likely named after Tasman's navigator on this voyage—Frans (Franchoys) Jacobszoon Visscher—although in Tasman's journal reference is made to several canoes that were lying offshore and looked as though they were used for fishing. Tasman's names for these islands have since become corrupted. By the time Parkinson published his map of New Ireland in 1907, the southernmost island of the Tabar group (Big Tabar) was known to Westerners as Gardeners Island and the northernmost island (Simberi) had become Fishers Island. By 1907 Lihir was known by a variety of names, including several variants of Tasman's original, so that Gardenys had become Garret Dennis, Gerrit Denys, or Gerrit de Neijs.

3. Two recent translations of Tasman's journal are Asscher 2004 and Hooker 2002.

4. *Madara* means "young man."

5. Further linguistic relationships in the New Ireland region can be seen in Ross 1988: Fig. 11.

6. Sharks are the most common *masalai* animals on both Tabar and Lihir, connecting people and the ownership of land on both island groups. The ritual format of honoring the dead, however, is quite different. Tabar is the ultimate source of most *malagan* rites that are used in the northern part of the mainland of New Ireland. Lihir is much more strongly connected in its ritual format with the island groups to the southeast (Tanga and Anir) and with the region around Namatanai.

7. A *malagan* sub-tradition is known as a "Big-Name" in the Tok Pisin language used in New Ireland.

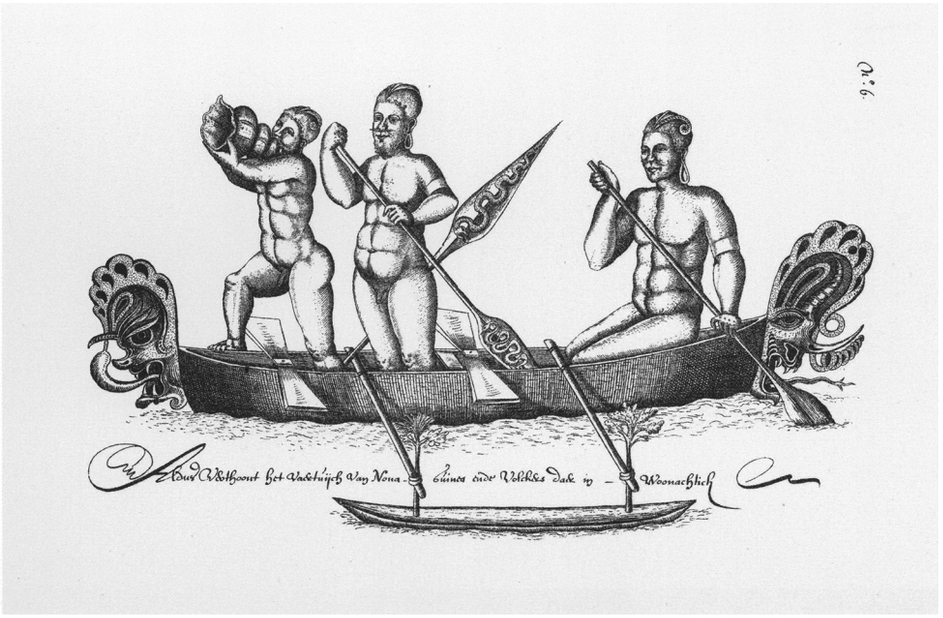


Fig. 40
Three men in a shark-hunting canoe. Engraving after a drawing made by Gilsemans in 1643, off the south coast of Big Tabar Island.

in a *malagan* ceremony. Many Tabar people married men or women from the mainland of New Ireland. When a mainlander dies, the ritual side of the funeral is usually conducted by a group of men from Tabar who are there to honor the name of their dead brother-in-law or sister-in-law; at the same time there is a need to display their ritual property in public so that it can be passed on to the next generation. Around half the time this ritual property is passed to the next generation who happen to be people from the Notsi, Madak, Nalik, Kara, or even Tigak regions. In such cases the *malagan* rights leave Tabar and become part of the ritual property of *malagan*-using mainlanders.

This is not to say that all *malagan* rights were created and developed on Tabar. In fact, a number of these rights had their origin on the mainland, and the language used in some of the sub-traditions reflects this mainland origin. Ritual rights that were created in the Notsi region, for example, will use songs sung in the Notsi language that had been used at the time when the rights were created. But Tabar is the great wellspring of *malagan*.

There are several stories told on Tabar about *malagan*, although it is a tradition that is lived rather than spoken about. One of these stories is about drifters and how they used *malagan* to gain access to land. These drifters were people who did not have any land of their own. They would stay on the beach, maybe marry some of the local people, and then move on again. To get permission to make a garden on someone else's land they would work a *malagan* ceremony to honor the dead of the people who owned the land. If a drifter man married a local woman, his *malagan* rights would go to her children.

Although this story was recorded from only one man on Simberi Island in 1983, it was very similar to a reality that we recorded during a *malagan* ceremony on Big Tabar Island in 2001. It suggests the tantalizing possibility that this type of relationship between drifters and landowners, which can also be read as saltwater people and bush people, has very old origins. The people who made Lapita pottery 2,000 years ago and eventually colonized the entire Pacific region were drifters, sea people who kept moving on, leaving behind on the beach their genes, and people who took up part of their culture.

pl. 64 (detail, see p. 184)

Tools used in the creation of art

Michael Gunn

New Irelanders, like many other people in the Pacific, understand carving to be the process of removing excess wood or stone from an already preconceived image. Art objects are generally made by reducing wood or stone to a foundation image, which is then integrated with paint, fibers, shells, seeds, and other materials to produce the final work of art. Masks are complex constructions made to withstand the stresses of dancing, yet most art objects are made to be used only once, then destroyed. Exceptions are the heavy wooden heads used in parts of *malagan* ritual associated with rainmaking, hardwood *uli* figures, and house posts; these were all reused and repainted many times.

Almost all masks and figures produced in the northern region were made from the easily worked wood of the *Alstonia scholaris* tree, which was felled, trimmed, then left to dry for several months before the wood was carved. Metal arrived in New Ireland initially in the form of pieces of iron hoop that were taken from barrels on board ships and were traded by Western sailors for coconuts and other food items. Western visitors later used hoop iron and other trade goods such as glass beads to purchase artworks, weapons, and other objects. It was not until the period of almost continuous Western contact with New Ireland in the 1860s that the use of metal tools became relatively widespread.[1] Before this period, wood was worked in a wide variety of techniques. Controlled burning with fire was probably the most effective means of felling trees, and three-dimensional forms were carved by blowing air through a bamboo tube to control the progress of a burning ember. Knives and chisels were made from shell, stone (see pl. 52),[2] bone, teeth, and pig tusk. Once the wood was shaped, it was finished with rasps made from coral and sandpaper made from shark skin and leaves. The finished wood was then coated with lime and seasoned for several months. If it was a mask used in the northern region, the head covering would be constructed and attached before the wooden section was painted. Head coverings were constructed

1. Vicky Barnecutt pers. comm.

2. From our fieldwork in 2001 and 2003 it became apparent that stone chisels such as Stuttgart 62994 (pl. 52) were known more as weapons for killing men than as tools for shaping wood.

from a wide variety of materials including coconut husk and fiber, bark-cloth, rattan, palm leaf, human hair, twine, shells, plant seeds, lime, and many other indigenous materials. The final paint on the wooden section of the mask included red ochre, black charcoal, white lime derived from fresh coral, and a yellow color derived from the rootlets of a tree.[3] In the early 1880s artists started to use synthetic ultramarine (Reckitts Blue or Berliner Waschblau) that was most likely obtained from Queensland recruiting ships initially and, later, from German colonial sources.[4] Use of this distinctive blue color seems to have died out in the 1890s.

3. Possibly a *Morinda sp.* and turmeric, among other sources.

4. Barton & Weik 1998; Odegaard & Crawford 1996; Barnecutt 2006.

pl. 52
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
62994
Stone chisel; a New Irelander recently said that these were attached to a haft and used to kill men, not to carve wood.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Arthur Krockenberger, Katu Plantation, east coast Kara region, New Ireland, 1909.
Stone.
L: 21; Diameter: 4 cm.

Northern architecture

◂ VI.2

Michael Gunn

On a very general level, villages in northern New Ireland generally have the graveyard as their central core where most of the dominant clan's maternal ancestors are buried. Close to the graveyard is a men's house, and in the 19th and early 20th centuries one or more taboo houses might be located nearby, each often enclosed within its own stone wall.[1] These taboo houses were used for initiation and other cultural practices characterized by a range of prohibitions and other restricted behaviors. Some taboo houses were for men, others for women. Carved and decorated house boards were placed on the front entrances of both the taboo houses and the men's houses. In some regions the men's houses were heavily decorated, as were the taboo houses associated with *malagan* (see fig. 42 and 43). Although very few architectural ornaments have been collected with reliable documentation, several men in New Ireland in 2001 and 2003 suggested that house boards such as Berlin VI 2822 a, b (pl. 28) and Paris private collection (pl. 53), were attached to the front of men's houses to represent the aggression of their inhabitants: "The mouth could be open to show that they want to fight, that they want to eat their enemies. If you came to a men's house and saw these you would feel fear. In those days a warrior made the law."[2]

Architectural constructions found in northern New Ireland are much more complex than they appear to an outside observer. On the Tabar Islands today, for example, a village is typically a string of hamlets—usually between two and ten—located along the coast and positioned near a gap in the reef through which ocean-going canoes can pass. A hamlet generally consists of a double line of houses centered on one or more walled enclosures. Such enclosures are permanent fixtures in Tabar geography, with many abandoned village sites retaining their stone fences.

Within each enclosure there is usually at least one men's house belonging to the clan that owns the land. Other men's houses will be found outside the enclosure, in the village, and among the family houses. A forked tree trunk, which provides a stile between the open village and the more restricted enclosure, is one of the liminal objects used to breach the boundary between a potentially sacred or tabooed space and the secular world of the open village.

In addition to the men's house, each enclosure contains a graveyard and a *malagan* working area. The enclosures are used both as graveyards and as *malagan* ritual sites, for all *malagan* ritual sites are graveyards. Ownership rights for each *malagan* from Tabar can be traced to its geographic source at a *malagan* ritual site somewhere on Tabar. Several hundred *malagan* ritual sites can be found in currently inhabited villages on Tabar, with many more in old village sites situated inland up on ridges.

Mi aro is the Tabar phrase for the *malagan* aspect of the enclosure, and it introduces another dimension of interpretation. An *aro* is the primary *malagan* area and as such is bound with various taboo restrictions. At least one *aro* exists within each enclosure, and two or more *aro* often exist beside each other within the one enclosure and are separated by bamboo or stone fences. Each *aro* is specific to a *malagan* Big-Name sub-tradition. These *aro* are maintained as separate entities even if all the clan owners of a

Fig. 41
Probably a men's house in Lakurdemau (now Lakuramau) village, east coast Kara-Nalik region, northern New Ireland.
Photo taken during the 1907–1909 Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

1. Men's taboo houses were probably used all over northern New Ireland in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today such houses are rarely used, but the use of taboo is widespread.

2. Abel Kolmau, a Pitpittoka man living in Kisela village, east coast Patpatar, 2003.

Fig. 42–43
Mask house (upper) and ritual or taboo house in *malagan* enclosure, Logogon village, east coast Nalik region, northern New Ireland, 1931.
Photos taken by Alfred Bühler.

particular *malagan* grouping have died out. An *aro* is primarily divided into two sections: an outer non-sacred area and a sacred or tabooed inner section. The sacred section is where *malagan* is made and where the graveyard is located. The sanctity of this area is reinforced with magical power and is a highly tabooed place.

pl. 53
France, Paris, private collection
Architectural element which most likely came from a men's house, a men's taboo house, or an initiation house. Carved from wood and painted with a mouth top and bottom and a series of eyes attached to a vine-like image with a bird at the top. Some New Ireland men in 2003 said that the mouths indicated that the board was created during the time when people ate their enemies.
New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known; probably mid- to late 19th century.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 96,5; W: 19; D: 2 cm.

Next pages
pl. 54
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 32813, a-i.
Wall from a men's house, a men's taboo house, or an initiation house; nine planks featuring heads carved and painted in the northern style.
Northern New Ireland [published registration data].
Collected in New Ireland by Edgar Walden of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition, 1907–09.
Acquired 1910.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; rootlets, bamboo, manufactured black textile.
H: 85; L: 180; D: 12 cm.

Uli figures [1]

◂ VI.3

Michael Gunn

Almost dwarflike in appearance with a big and powerful bearded head, strong body, stocky legs, and nubile breasts, the *uli* figure has become an icon among Western collectors of Oceanic art. The sheer strength of presence of these amazing figures ranks them among the greatest works of Oceanic art in existence.

From Krämer's work and the few fragments available to us from other sources, it appears as though *uli* figures were ancestral images that represented the power and strength required of a New Ireland clan leader. An ideal leader was aggressive and strong, yet nurturing, feeding his people when they needed his strength. The feminine breasts found on every one of these figures may have represented that nurturing side.

Augustin Krämer in 1909 recorded a sequence of *uli* ceremonies at Lamasong village in the Madak-speaking region of the northern part of the east coast. He noted that the *uli* funerary rites were a loan cult on the coast, for the villages in the rain forests of the mountains were the ones where people knew how to make the figures and possessed the secrets of the magic spells associated with them. This is the region northwest of the Lelet Plateau, inland from the coastal village of present-day Konos.

We know of 255 *uli* figures that are now in museums or private collections, but very few came with any documentation.[1] Some *uli* figures were carved from hardwood and, unlike their *malagan* cousins, were repainted many times. Close examination suggests that perhaps 10 percent of these were carved before metal tools were available, so those may have already been several hundred years old when they were collected. Although it is possible to discern 11 main styles of *uli* figure, we do not know if these began as portraits of 11 different leaders that were then later reproduced by different artists, even though this seems to be the most likely origin of the tradition.

▾ **Fig. 44**
Three *uli* figures. Malum village, inland Madak region, northern New Ireland, 1931.
Photo taken by Alfred Bühler.

▸ **pl. 55**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 55022
Painted wooden *uli* figure, probably depicted standing on a reef stone.
Northern New Ireland, Madak region [attributed MG & PP].
Date of collection in New Ireland not known, probably late 19th to early 20th century.
Acquired 1969 from Hans Franke estate, Berlin.
Wood, shell; red, white, and black pigments; resin, rootlets.
H: 158; W: 47; D: 13 cm.

1. In recent years some authors have been using the term *nalik* when referring to *uli* figures. This mistake first appears in the otherwise authoritative Kaeppler, Kaufmann, Newton's 1993 *L'Art océanien* where four *uli* figures are referred to as "Nalik (uli)." Registration data shows that none of these figures (Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin VI 27739; Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin VI 55022; Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg 502i; Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden 2087-1) were collected in New Ireland with the name *nalik*. The mistake appears to be derived from Krämer's description of an *uli* ceremonial sequence during which he referred to the *uli* figures by a secret name that he transcribed as *ä alik* (Krämer 1916: 276, 278) or *ë álik* (Krämer 1925: 59). A poor photocopy may well have rendered the "ä" as "n," and now the error continues into perpetuity. Nalik is a language group in New Ireland, not an *uli* figure.

Uli figures [2]

Brigitte Derlon

Originating in the mountainous center of the island, *uli* figures are characterized by the combination of female breasts and a penis. They represent the moon, a near-divine body to which the myths of this region attribute a dual sexual identity. As the wife of the sun, the moon incarnates the female principle of fertility and the power of regeneration. As the cousin of the sun, it is a totemic emblem of one of the two groups of clans, or halves, which underlie social organization.

The main motifs of the *uli* reflect these myths. The powerful male body of the figure wearing the feather insignia of the village chiefs on his head refers to the moon assimilated to the chief of one of the halves. The female moon, indicated by rounded breasts, is shown in the mythical invocation of the lunar cycle by the central figure and smaller figures which represent the full moon and the waxing and waning moons. Lassoed by the humans to whom it appears for the first time, the moon disappears to die beneath the horizon and to be born again at the beginning of the next cycle.[1]

Reused from one ritual to another, unlike most other *malagan*, but also protected by copyright, *uli* figures disappeared from the area in which they originated early in the first quarter of the 20th century. The ceremonies associated with them included many practices that the missionaries fought against: sexual licence, the circumcision of young initiates, the overmodeling of human skulls, and, probably, headhunting.

pl. 56
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
45809
Painted wooden *uli* figure with smaller figures on shoulders.
Northern New Ireland, Madak region [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Albert Hahl, 1906.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red, white, black, and yellow pigments; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), fiber.
H: 162; W: 59; D: 48 cm.

1. See Peekel 1932 and Derlon 1997.

◂ **pl. 57**
USA, Bloomington, Indiana University Art Museum.
IUAM 91.498
Painted wooden *uli* figure with hands in front of body.
Northern New Ireland, east coast Madak region, Malom village [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Bezirkschef Wilhelm Wostrack, Namatanai, New Ireland, 1908.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell, fiber, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*); lime, black and red pigments.
H: 140; W: 60; D: 50 cm.

▸ **pl. 58**
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
70.1999.2.1
Uli figure; painted wooden figure depicted with hands at ear level. This figure is very old and was most likely carved with stone tools. The sculptor was a master of his craft, for the figure is flawless both in its composition and execution.
Northern New Ireland, Madak region [attributed MG & PP].
Probably collected in New Ireland by Franz Boluminski before 1908. Acquired by Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig (Me 8126), 1908.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell, resin, fiber; lime, red and black pigments.
H: 150; W: 55; D: 50 cm.

pl. 59
USA, St. Louis, Saint Louis Art Museum.
61:1977
Small painted wooden *uli* figure.
Northern New Ireland, Madak region
[attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Gift of Morton D. May, 1977.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red and black pigments; fiber, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 53; W: 11.5; D: 11.5 cm.

pl. 60
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
62972a
Small wooden *uli* figure; smoke-blackened
from being stored in the rafters of a men's house
for a long time. *Uli* figures were washed,
then repainted before use.
Northern New Ireland, west coast Madak region,
Lemau village [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Arthur Krockenberger, Katu Plantation,
east coast Kara region, New Ireland, 1909.
Wood; soot, lime, red and black pigments.
H: 72; W: 14; D: 16 cm.

Overmodeled skulls

◂ VI.4

Brigitte Derlon

In New Ireland, where there were various ways of treating corpses (burial, cremation, immersion, etc.), the skulls were almost always removed and preserved, coated with red ochre, to be exhibited with the *malagan* objects.

In the mountainous interior of the island, the funerary rites centered on *uli* figures started with the temporary burial of the preserved skulls, above which fast-growing cuttings were planted, thus associating death and fertility. Several weeks later, the skulls were dug up and overmodeled before being placed on the display structures alongside the *uli* figures and revealed to the public. They were called *malagan marratampirivit*, literally "a terrifying assemblage," a particularly appropriate expression for some of them whose enormous eye sockets and grimacing mouths must have looked very frightening.

Overmodeled skulls resemble the carved heads of the *uli*[1] in the treatment of the hair, the mouth, and even the color and curve of the face. As Gifford[2] has suggested, before being made from a single piece, *uli* figures were perhaps composed of a wooden body and a detachable, overmodeled skull. We might add that they probably resembled the specimen collected by Wostrack at the beginning of the century, which has a headless wooden body endowed, like the *uli*, with female breasts, a penis, and lateral hoops used as handles; a piece which the museums often exhibit with an overmodeled skull by way of a head.[3]

pl. 61
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 54496
Small and unusual overmodeled skull, possibly from an animal.
Southern New Ireland [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland in 1909. Acquired from Karl Emil Rudolf, Werningerode, 1962.
Bone, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), shell, seeds (*Adenathera pavonina*), plant material.
H: 10; W: 7; L: 15 cm.

1. First noticed by A. Krämer 1925.
2. Gifford 1974: 155.
3. For an illustration, see A. Krämer 1925: Taf. 13, or Kaeppler, Kaufmann and Newton 1993: Pl. 173.

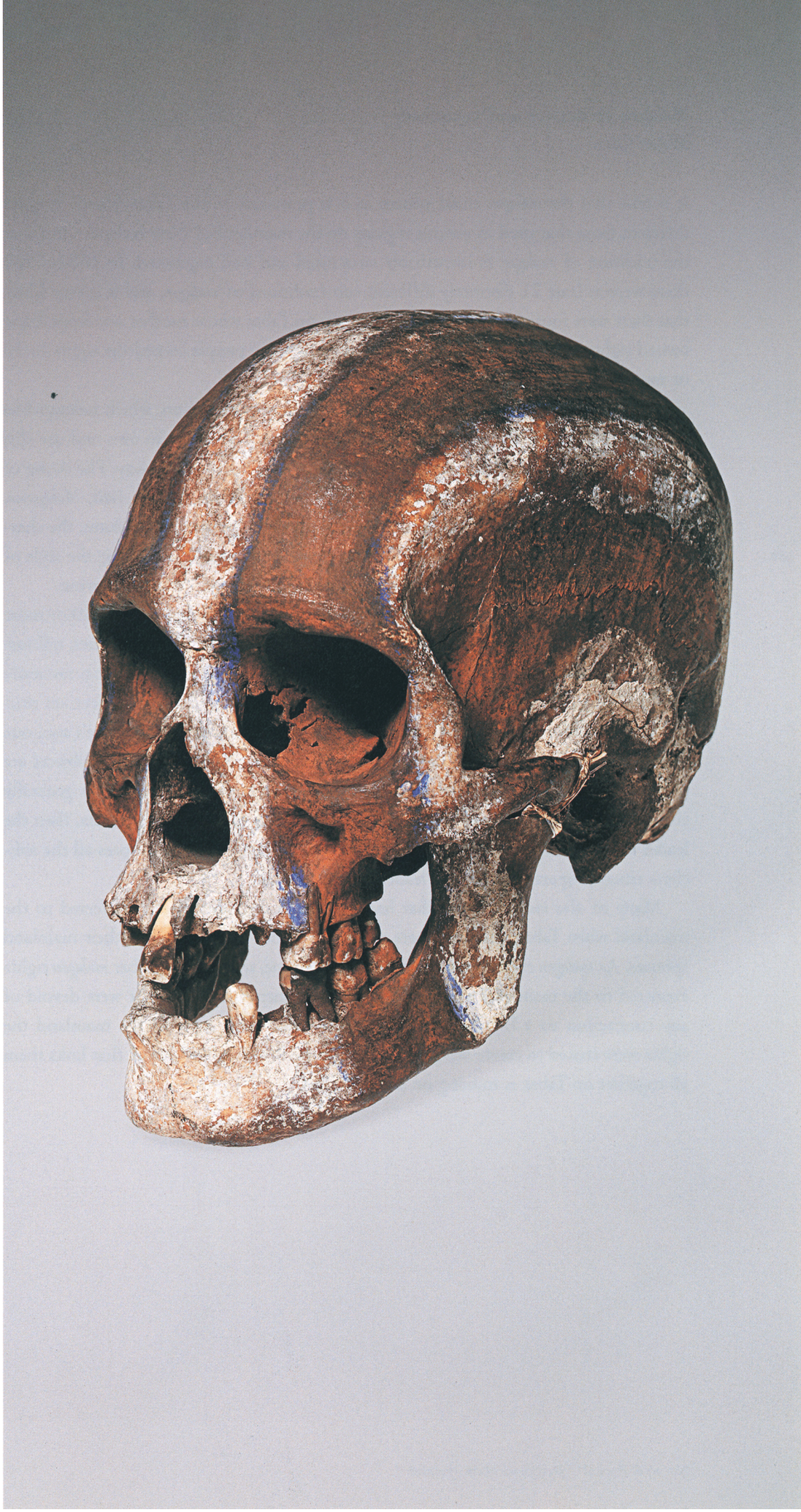
Overmodeled skulls

◂ **pl. 62**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
55772
Overmodeled skull.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Bezirkschef Wilhelm Wostrack,
Namatanai, New Ireland, 1908.
Bone (human skull), adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), shell (small spiral shells, bivalve shell, *Turbo petholatus*); lime and other white pigment, yellow and red pigments; seeds (*Adenathera pavonina*), fiber.
H: 20; W: 14; D: 19 cm.

▸ **pl. 63**
Switzerland, Basel, Museum der Kulturen.
Vb 5009
Overmodeled skull.
New Ireland [registration data].
Collected in New Ireland by Prof. Dr. Neisser of Breslau, 1904–1905. Acquired from A. J. Speyer, Berlin, 1920.
Bone (human skull), adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), plant material, shell; lime, red and yellow pigments.
H: 25; W: 26; D: 18 cm.

pl. 64
USA, New York, American Museum of Natural History.
99/6909
Overmodeled skull.
New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated by T. E. Donne, 1913.
Bone (human skull), adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), fiber; lime, black pigment.
H: 15; W: 12; D: 24 cm.

pl. 65
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
55777
Painted skull.
Northern New Ireland, east coast Madak region,
Lengwit village near Kanabu [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Bezirkschef Wilhelm Wostrack, Namatanai,
New Ireland, 1908.
Bone (human skull); lime, red ochre, blue pigment.
H: 15; W: 14; D: 21 cm.



Malagan structure and taxonomy

◂ VI.5

Michael Gunn

It is true that the *malagan* ritual system as it is practiced on the Tabar Islands is quite different from that used in various regions on the mainland of New Ireland. On Tabar the tradition of *malagan* is identifiably structured and well organized. In 1982–1984 there were at least 21 distinctly different sub-traditions of *malagan*, and it is very likely that there were more in the past.[1] Every person on Tabar whose mother was from Tabar owned rights to produce at least one *malagan*, and many people owned the rights to 10 or more.

Each *malagan* sculpture is derived from its original prescription, which belonged to a "string" or "chain" of *malagan* owned by a sub-clan. The rights to own and use this prescription are generally passed matrilineally during a *malagan* ceremony. The string of *malagan* would belong to one of the Big-Name sub-traditions such as *Valik*, *Malagatsak*, *Kulepmu*, or *Vavara*. At the Big-Name level are found the operating procedures, the character of each *malagan* within the Big-Name; the songs; the way of behaving; the style of a *malagan* display house; and many other aspects of ritual context and behavior.

At the "string" level, a sub-clan may own the rights to produce and use 10 or more different *malagan* sculptural objects. These may include masks, figure sculptures, tall vertical totem-pole-like *malagan*, and the horizontal *malagan* images. Some pieces are more significant than others. The rights to own, produce, and use a *malagan* object are ritually passed from one generation to the next, from mother's brother to sister's son, one piece at a time. Almost every time a *malagan* ceremony takes place, *malagan* objects are produced and displayed, and when they are displayed their ownership rights generally change hands. So if a sub-clan owns a string of rights to 10 *malagan* objects, then the leader would need to attend up to 10 *malagan* ceremonies to be able to pass all the sub-clan's ritual property to the next leader of the sub-clan.

Many of the *malagan* rights that had originated on Tabar were transferred to the mainland when Tabar *malagan* owners needed to honor the relatives of their mainland spouses. As *malagan* rights are transferred one at a time, most of the Tabar *malagan* rights exported to the mainland were transferred as fragments, orphans that were devoid of any connection to a Big-Name sub-tradition. Once they were on the mainland the rights were reused to create *malagan* objects, but the taxonomic structure that links them all together on Tabar is missing on the mainland.

1. There is a strong consistency between data recorded on Tabar in 1908 by Edgar Walden and that found in 1982–1984 by Gunn.

Fig. 45
Mourner wearing feather mask, just before start of *vavil* funerary procession, Tatau village, Tabar Islands, 1984.
Photo taken by Michael Gunn.
Courtesy Northern Territory Museum, Darwin.

Malagan woven sculpture; *vavara* [1]

◂ VI.6

Michael Gunn

Vavara uses an art style completely different from the other sub-traditions of *malagan.*[1] These distinctive woven discs, which are also known as *vavara,* were first recorded by Krämer who referred to them as sun images. Photographs taken by a member of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition in April 1909 depict a huge three-dimensional disc painted bright white, yellow, and red that was shown in a special display house erected in a *malagan* ritual site and surrounded by a very dark and rainy mountain jungle.

Vavara is known from the Tabar Islands and many places on the northern part of the mainland. Its probable origin was on the Lelet Plateau or in the mountainous region northwest of Lelet. Both Tabar and places on the mainland share a similar origin myth for *vavara*—that of a woman whose son was thrown out of the ritual site because he did not own the rights to use *malagan* to honor the people he had married. One morning, as the mother was defecating in the bushes, she noticed a spider weaving a web, and it gave her the idea for the first *vavara,* which she taught to her son. He brought a prototype of the *vavara* into the men's area, where it was accepted as a *malagan.* Since that time, of course, women have been strongly tabooed from having any contact with a *vavara* object.

Due to the very strong restrictions placed on *vavara,* only three of these distinctive objects are known in museum collections from the early colonial period; another four *vavara* were photographed in situ in New Ireland. Today the *vavara* is known as a widely distributed *malagan* sub-tradition, and we found people who owned the rights living in many places in northern New Ireland. More than 40 specific subtypes of *vavara* are known on Tabar where they are used in *malagan* ceremonies for either men or women.

A *vavara* is probably best considered as a non-representational work of art, even though Krämer referred to these ritual objects as "suns." Many *vavara* owners on Tabar said that Westerners often make the mistake of thinking of a *vavara* as an image of the sun.[2] They said that the *vavara* is much more like a flower, with its projecting center, than a sun, but they emphasized that both flower and sun are just images to talk about and that the *vavara* is based upon a spider's web, its house, the original image of its creation. Unlike wooden *malagan* images, the power of *vavara* is treated as something that is real and potent, with a power that is independent of the men who created it. None of the other *malagan* objects used on Tabar had the same degree of taboo and secrecy surrounding them, as did the *vavara.*

When I recorded the construction of several *vavara malagan* objects in 1984, they were made close to the corpse of the dead man, to capture the spirit that was hovering close to his body. The initial stages of construction involved preparation of the *vavara*'s "bones" and was a highly tabooed activity that was followed by a special meal provided for the workers to separate them from the later stages of construction that were less tabooed. Immediately after this meal the workers' spirits were recalled to their bodies so that they would not get entangled with the dead man's spirit in the *vavara* as the *malagan* was constructed.

1. Also known as *luara, oara, a uare, wawara, wowora,* or other variants—depending upon the region.

2. Gunn's fieldwork data from 1983–1984.

Fig. 46
Large *vavara* in its display house. Kingmakat village, possibly inland of Lemeris village, east coast Madak region, northern New Ireland, April 1909. *Photo taken during the Deutsche Marine-Expedition.*

Vavara malagan are considered powerful and dangerous. In particular the "eye" or "throat" of a *vavara* is attributed with power and is covered up with a coconut-leaf mat when it is completed but not yet on public display. *Vavara malagan* are usually burnt in a fire during the night after they have been used in a *malagan* ceremony, unless purchased by a foreigner and immediately removed from the village. People said that in the old days sorcerers would use the power of the *vavara* to kill, so *malagan* owners developed the practice of throwing such a source of danger into the fire. Apparently the smoke from a burning *vavara* has the power to harm, but burning in the night or early dawn is safe because the calm air allows the smoke to go straight up.

An interesting aspect of *vavara malagan* is that they are judged by their beauty, whereas other *malagan* are judged by their correctness. A final point is that a number of songs used in *vavara malagan* on Tabar are *girigir*, saltwater fishing songs. The significance of this fact is not yet clear.

Malagan woven sculpture; *vavara* [2]

Susanne Küchler and Graeme Were

In New Ireland, the strength of the matrilineal clan in this society depends, to a large extent, on the production of fiber-based woven structures, whose circular configuration connotes their infinite, cyclical conception. These *vavara malagan* commemorate only the female dead (which includes those males who die prior to initiation, and are thus assigned female status irrespective of their biological sex). The material used for the circular artifact is a creeper, a strong vine collected deep inside the forest in an area associated with protective spirits. It is brought back to the beach and is soaked in seawater, before being dried and woven around a cane structure. It is prolific in the east-coast Nalik-speaking area, as communities there share relatives with Simberi, the northern most island of the Tabar group, where the *vavara* is said to originate. The songs associated with the *malagan*, as well as the prominent features of the *vavara* itself (mouth and its tentacles), are in the Simberi language.

Like *malagan* and *kapkap*, mythology links the *vavara* with the sea and with women through temporal and spatial ideas associated with trapping. The image itself is said to be a reflection of a spider's web dreamt by a woman who required a *malagan* for her children born out of wedlock. The *malagan* speaks about the ideas that are the basis of matrilineal social organization, such as immortality and self-sufficiency, that is in marked contrast to the wooden *malagan*, which is about sharing and competitive transmission of rights to images. One cannot acquire rights to *vavara* and, likewise, the *malagan* is destroyed through fire, leaving no remains from which to recall its form. The design of the *vavara* is said to be specific to each sub-clan and each settlement, but is dreamt anew each time. Its display with personal possessions of the dead underscores its association with the concept of person, and with ideas that link the finality of life with immortality.

pl. 66
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
65344
Four-tongued radial *vavara*-type *malagan* sculpture.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Bezirkschef Wilhelm Wostrack,
Namatanai, New Ireland, 1908.
Vines, palm leaf ribs, plant leaves,
fiber, chicken feathers; lime, red, yellow,
and ultramarine blue pigments.
Diameter: 140; D: 30 cm.

Sound-producing instruments in *malagan*

◂ VI.7

Michael Gunn

The primary sound-producing instrument used in *malagan* is the human voice. Many people from New Ireland have superb singing voices, and *malagan* songs are sung strongly and clearly, without other instrumentation. Each *malagan* sub-tradition has a series of songs that belong to it, and most of these songs appear to be ancient in origin. Songs belonging to some of the more recently developed *malagan* sub-traditions use a language that is found today in northern New Ireland. However, a large proportion of *malagan* songs are sung in languages that no longer exist outside *malagan*. These are languages that were probably used by people who lived in northern New Ireland hundreds or even thousands of years ago.

Other sound-producing instruments played during *malagan* activity include: *garamut* slit drums; conch-shell horns; carved bamboo bull-roarers; seedcase rattles; dog-teeth rattles; shell rattles; and the unique *livika*. Each object has a particular role to play. The heavy wooden horizontal *garamut* slit drum, for example, is used as a center or base of authority: a masked man may be seen dancing frantically, yet silently, beside the *garamut* as he prepares to remove taboos from the graveyard; *malagan* leaders give speeches while standing beside the *garamut*; sharp taps on the *garamut* orchestrate sequences in *malagan* activity and in the dances that occur during the change of ownership. Conch-shell horns in groups of two or three are blown during specific sub-traditions of *malagan*, much as they had been used by shark hunters to announce a kill. These horns have also been used to bring villagers together for a court meeting.

The best known sound-producing instrument used in *malagan* is the *livika*.[1] More than 50 are known in museums and private collections, and all feature a series of three or four polished wooden "teeth" that produce a very piercing sound.[2] A *livika* was often carved so that it looked like a curling animal with a head at one end and the sound-producing "teeth" as the legs and tail. It was played by rubbing the palm of the hand along the "teeth," starting at the tail and moving toward the head. When held in the playing position, cradled in the left arm and rubbed with the right palm, the *livika* feels like a baby—alive and crying. New Irelanders refer to this instrument as a type of bird and each *livika* has its own personal name. Some *livika* are very old, and many were carved before metal tools came to the region. This instrument is fully incorporated within the *malagan* traditions on the Tabar Islands as well as on the mainland from the Madak area (especially the Lelet Plateau) north to the Nalik-speaking region.[3] During a *malagan* ceremony the *livika* and its player are hidden in a small enclosure placed on a root table (in the Madak region) or swung from an overhanging tree (on Tabar and other regions).

The painted wooden sculptures of *malagan* sometimes depict musical instruments associated with the character of a *malagan* sub-tradition. For example, figures shown playing pan-pipes are part of the sub-tradition of *Turu* on the Tabar Islands; pan-pipes are usually considered seductive instruments used to charm women. Conch-shell trumpets are occasionally represented on *malagan* sculpture. Certain sound-producing instruments not associated with *malagan* include the bamboo drum, kundu hand drum, and bamboo flute.

pl. 67
USA, St. Louis, Saint Louis Art Museum. 132:1978
Three note rub drum.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland by Wilhelm Wostrack, before 1908. Gift of Morton D. May, 1977.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime.
H: 19; W: 15; L: 42 cm.

pl. 68
USA, Chicago, Field Museum. 145482
Four note rub drum.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Voogdt et al., 1913.
Wood, resin.
H: 11.5; W: 10.5; L: 31 cm.

1. *Livika* is the name used for this instrument in the Lelet Plateau region, its probable place of origin. It is also known as *lapka* in the coastal Madak region, *lunet* or *launiet* on the Tabar Islands, and *loanuat* in the Notsi region. The names *livika* and *lapka* both refer to the same type of bird, but in different languages. On Tabar the instrument is usually referred to as *ma*, which means bird.

2. Although these vibrating wood sections have usually been referred to in the literature as "tongues," they are known as "teeth" on Tabar.

3. On Tabar the instrument is used within the *Lunet* sub-tradition of *malagan*; Messner (1983) recorded it within the *Walik* sub-tradition of *malagan* in the Nalik-speaking region on the mainland of New Ireland.

Malagan ritual context

◂ IV.8

Susanne Küchler

To this day, *malagan*—the funerary effigies used in New Ireland, a ubiquitous collected item in ethnographic museums worldwide—is the generic name of a funerary ritual that culminates in the production, revelation, and "death" of effigies. When installed in a structure that is specifically erected for its display, the effigy is thought to be alive, having been gradually animated during the process of production. Like the effigies of the kings in 14th and 15th century England and France, which matched, or even eclipsed, the dead body itself, the effigy is attended as though the dummy were the living person himself—being animated, and subsequently allowed to die, thus allowing the deceased person's soul to achieve immortality. The height of the *malagan* is the dramatic revelation of the effigy, followed moments later by the symbolic activation of its death, brought about by the transaction of its engraved image. What took often more than three months to prepare is over in an hour, the "empty" remains of effigies being taken to the forest to be left to decompose, or to the mission to be sold to collectors. What remains on the island, connecting the living through the forgetting of the dead, is the named image of *malagan* that may be recalled through dreaming to continue the work of capturing and transfiguring the souls of the dead.

The ritual context of *malagan* is, however, only the final act in the work for the dead. It condenses in precise spatial and temporal frames the transformation of the relation between the state of body, the state of the mourners, and the state of the soul; fences, houses, and platforms are erected and are left to age and fall apart before being rebuilt, thus effecting materially the work of transformation. New Ireland culture fully amplifies the doubleness of death, requiring actions upon the body and the soul, by issuing the fabrication of two types of representation, one tying down the memory of the deceased that can be independently verified (such as through inscriptions on tombstones) and the other replacing the texture of this memory with an image which takes over the work of remembering. The merging of the soul with the carved image of *malagan* designates this final act as a second burial, in which the soul of the dead is refigured as immortal in ways that grant legitimate powers to those who know how to effect this act of figuration.

As figural representation of the doubleness of death, *malagan* achieves the synthesis of the mental and the material and fashions a burial place of memory from which fresh recollections may be brought forth at any time. The image we see in the figure speaks of performances that inform both the manner of carving, requiring the cutting of incisions and the covering in patterns, as well as the building of the ritual space whose platforms, houses, and fences punctuate the temporal calendar of feasting and demarcate its place. That *malagan* is not designed to last, but to be repeated, is impressed upon us by its material fragility and composite form, both visualizing the processual nature of destruction itself, that alone ensures that the process of recollection can be repeated many times over.

Fig. 47
Malagan ritual specialist Pitsia reflecting on the role of *malagan* in the future life of the people of Tabar. Banesa village, Big Tabar Island, 2001.
Photo taken by Michael Gunn.

Malagan sculpture; canoes

◂ VI.9

Michael Gunn

Given the link between *malagan* objects and death, in addition to the hazardous occupation of crossing the open ocean in canoes without outriggers, it is often thought that *malagan* canoes containing images of people are soul canoes, transporting the spirits of the dead to the afterworld. But this apparently is not the case on Tabar; people living there today scoff at the idea of a soul canoe that transports dead spirits to the afterworld. They say this is an invention of Westerners who misunderstand New Irelanders. The two malagan "canoes" shown in the exhibition and featured in this catalogue can be used to demonstrate their point. Both "canoes" originated on the Tabar Islands. Dresden 12080 (pl. 69) was collected on Tabar before 1897, and Stuttgart 30158 (pl. 70) was carved by a man from Tabar who had clan relatives at Paruai village, in the Kara-speaking region on the east coast of mainland New Ireland, and was collected by Boluminski in 1903.[1]

Dresden 12080 (pl. 69) is, they say, a type of malagan canoe used on Tabar and on the mainland to represent the fact that a clan has moved from one location to another, followed later by their malagan ritual property. The canoe represents the travel of ritual property and is not a "soul canoe."

Stuttgart 30158 (pl. 70) is a spectacular *malagan*, but is even less of a "soul canoe." People on Tabar say that it is in fact an image of the big-mouth fish used as a death symbol at sea. The figures seated in the "fish" are *malagan* images representing the people who were being commemorated at Paruai and who had probably died at sea. Significantly, there was no afterworld for the people of pre-Christian Tabar. The traditional belief system of the people there took notice of the fact that death occurs when living things get eaten by other living things. In addition, a person is understood to be a manifestation of a life-force in the way that a leaf is a manifestation of a tree, and when a leaf dies it becomes food for something else. Analogously, the person dies and is eaten by something else, but the life-force does not die; it continues to exist, as the tree lives on after a leaf dies.

Canoes can be many things to New Irelanders. Field data collected on Tabar in 1982–84 and 2001 gives an indication of the range of symbolism associated with canoes when they are represented in *malagan*:

- Canoe as cargo carrier. Some canoes are portrayed in *malagan* ceremonies as supports for heavy masks.

- Canoe as fishing vessel. These were probably originally created to honor a fisherman.

- Canoe for catching sharks. A number of *malagan* sculptures representing shark-hunting canoes were originally created to honor shark hunters.

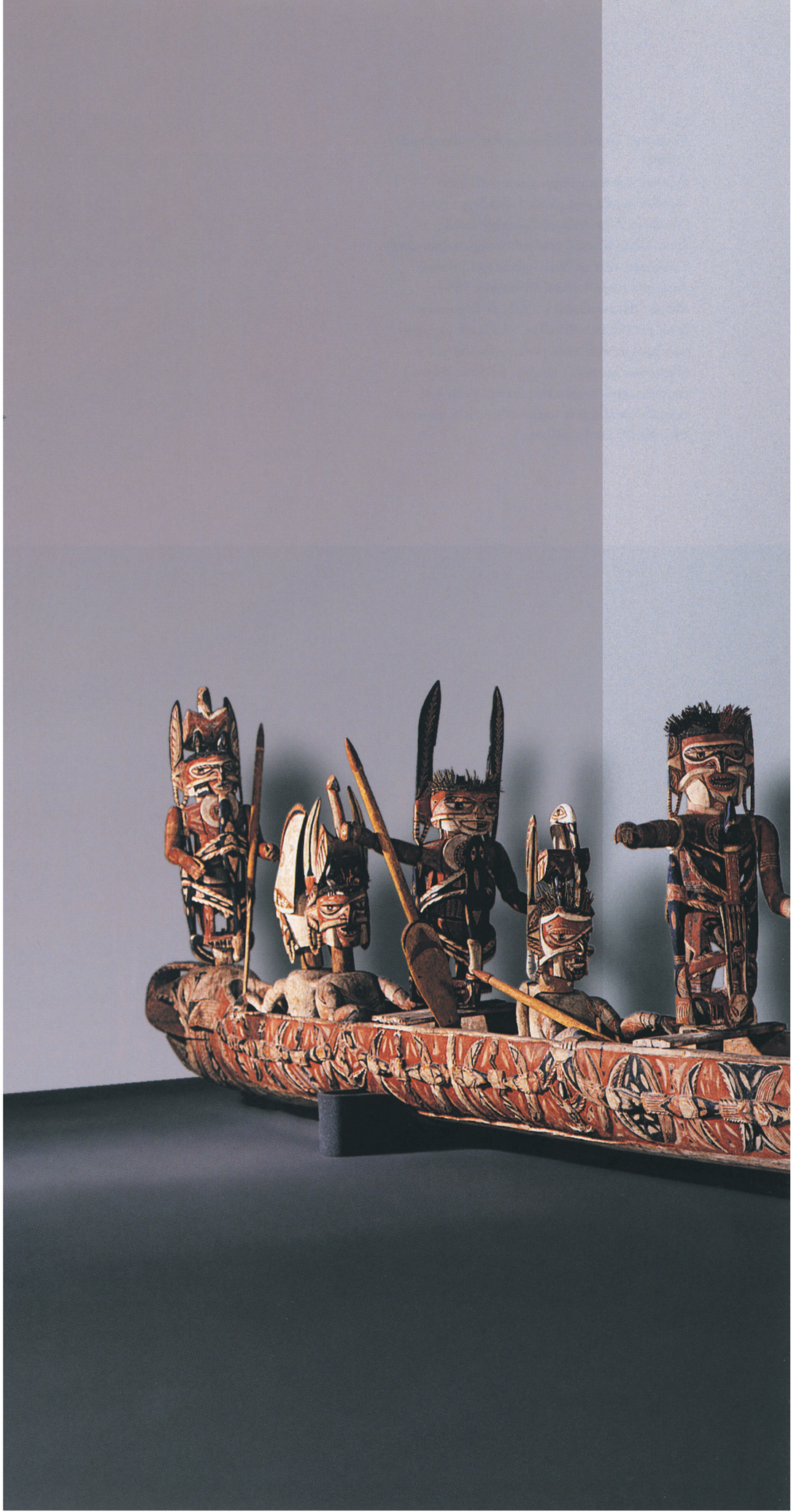
- Canoe for someone to stand in, being too afraid to go to sea. This image can be a reference to a male or female initiate cloistered inside the *malagan* ritual site.

- Canoe lost at sea and the occupants died. Many *malagan* canoes originate with bush people whose *malagan* image of a canoe represents coastal people who have died. In pre-colonial times the relationship between an inland village and a coastal village was often one of mutual dependence, and each would have made many *malagan* to honor the other. Those who died at sea would more likely be coastal people who would then be honored by their inland relatives seeking to maintain good relationships.

1. For the history of this piece see Barton 2000 and Barton & Weik 2001.

pl. 69
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 12080
Painted wooden *malagan* canoe with four wooden carved and painted standing figures. Northern New Ireland, Gardener Inseln (now Tabar Islands) [published registration data]. Collection date in New Ireland not known. Acquired from Richard Parkinson, 1897. Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, red, yellow, and black pigments; pandanus fruit fibrous husks, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), chicken feathers, beeswax, rootlets, cane, human hair, string, palm leaf, manufactured textile, resin, other plant material. H: 220; D: 50; L: 340 cm.

pl. 70
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
30158
Painted wooden *malagan* canoe in the form of a fish or shark, with five standing and five seated figures; most likely carved by a man from Tabar who had relatives in Paruai.
Northern New Ireland, eastern Kara region, Paruai village [published registration data].
Collected in New Ireland by Franz Boluminski, 1903.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*), adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), branchlets; lime, red ochre, black pigment; other plant material.
H: 150; W: 110; L: 600 cm.



Malagan sculpture; man and fish

◂ VI.10

Michael Gunn

A man or woman being swallowed by a fish is a very common image of death used in *malagan* in many regions of northern New Ireland, including Tabar. The phrase "big-mouth got him" is a way to refer to death. Several types of "big-mouth" fish have been recorded in *malagan*, but it is not entirely clear whether they are referring to different species of fish or if these names refer to different sets of *malagan* rights owned by different clans. It is quite clear that these fish are not sharks, for a number of *malagan* specialists who worked from 1982–2003 on Tabar as well as on the mainland were insistent that sharks are not represented in *malagan* because the sacredness of sharks prohibits their portrayal in this ritual system. The stated reason is that people in many clans share or derive their life-force from a particular shark.[1] However, on the mainland of New Ireland people's life-force is less commonly linked to a *masalai* shark and more often derived from *masalai* pigs, snakes, or birds.

On the Tabar Islands in 1984 we recorded a description of a *malagan* fish that had a carved wooden head, and when used in *malagan* context it had an attached body made from forest materials such as vines and leaves. At the climax of the *malagan* ceremony the belly of this fish was slit open and all kinds of food, betel nut, and tobacco fell out and were given to the participants. Stuttgart 47131 (pl. 73) is one of two very similar man-in-mouth-of-fish malagan sculptures, the other is now in Dresden.[2] It is not known if the two were used at the same malagan ceremony, or even if the same artist made them, but it is evident that they were both derived from the same sculptural idea and as a consequence were probably both made from the same copyright. Both depict a man held in the mouth of the fish, with his head on one side looking forward, and his feet on the other side of the mouth. The back of the Stuttgart fish suggests that it was originally attached to something else.

Dresden 32953 (pl. 72) is a very fine example of a type of malagan fish. Malagan specialists from Tabar as well as from the mainland identified this as a big-mouth fish[3] with the figure attached to the front of the tongue representing someone in the process of death. At least five examples of this type of malagan fish are known in museum collections. All feature a large tongue that extends over the top of the head and have a figure attached to the front. A related variant does not have a long tongue, but instead features four to six prong-like extensions in front of the face of the fish.

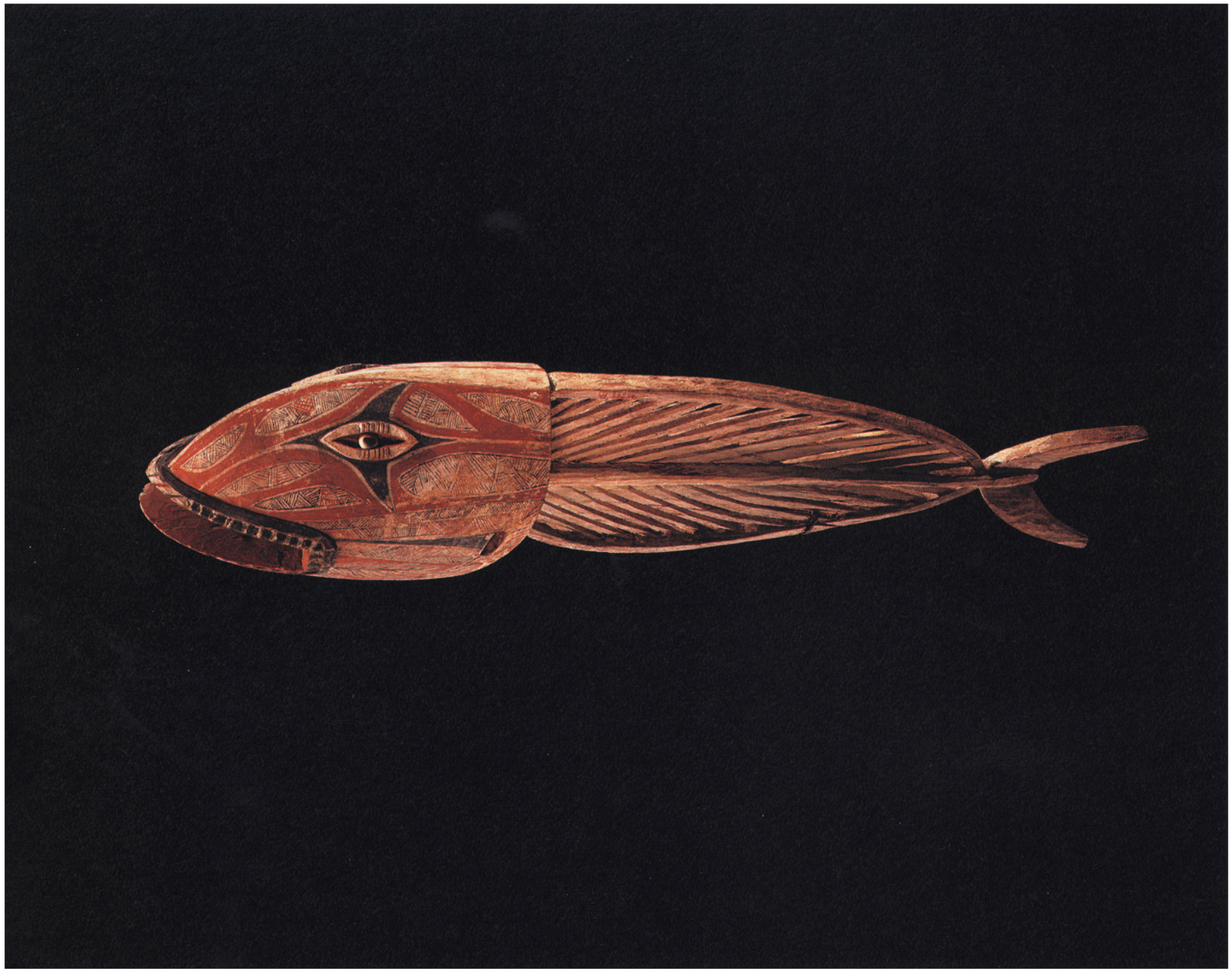
Skeletal or filleted fish such as Berlin IV 28597 (pl. 71) are less easily identified. The tusks in the mouth suggest that it is an image of a big-mouth, and the skeletal body certainly suggests death, but at least one *malagan* artist from the Notsi region on the mainland said that the skeletal body indicated that it was an image of a *masalai* or spirit fish.

1. On Tabar the relationship between a particular shark and a clan and its land is quite complex, but structurally is very similar to the concept of the Dreaming that is found in Aboriginal Australia.

2. Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden 68616.

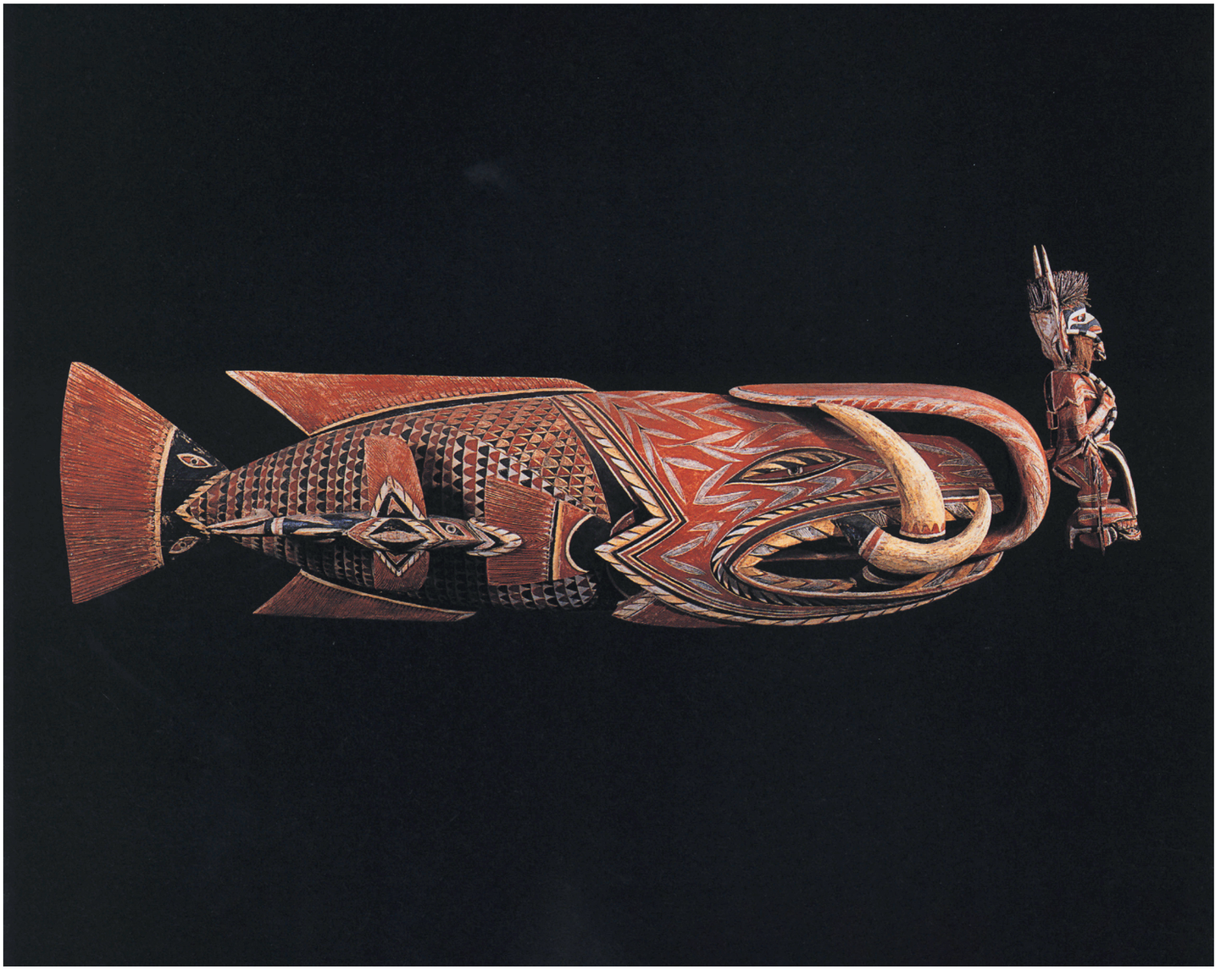
3. It was identified as a type of big-mouth fish called *lakau* both on the Tabar Islands as well as in the east coast Notsi region of the mainland.

pl. 71
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 28597
Malagan fish, filleted type. The rectangular
holes on the side of the face indicate
that this fish originally possessed side fins.
Northern New Ireland [field data].
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, black pigment.
Collected in New Ireland by Georg Friederici, 1908.
Acquired 1909.
H: 23; W: 17; L: 100 cm.



▾ **pl. 72**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
32953
Painted wooden *malagan* fish; with tongue on top of head and figure attached to front of tongue; probably an image of the big-mouth fish used as an image of death.
Northern New Ireland, Kara region, Lemakot village [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Dr. Stübel, New Ireland, 1914.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and yellow pigments; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), branchlets, rootlets.
H: 85; W: 46; L: 260 cm.

▸ **pl. 73**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
47131
Painted wooden *malagan* fish head with a human figure held in its mouth.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired before 1907.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), coral fragments.
L: 120; W: 100; D: 100 cm.



Malagan horizontal sculpture

◂ VI.11

Michael Gunn

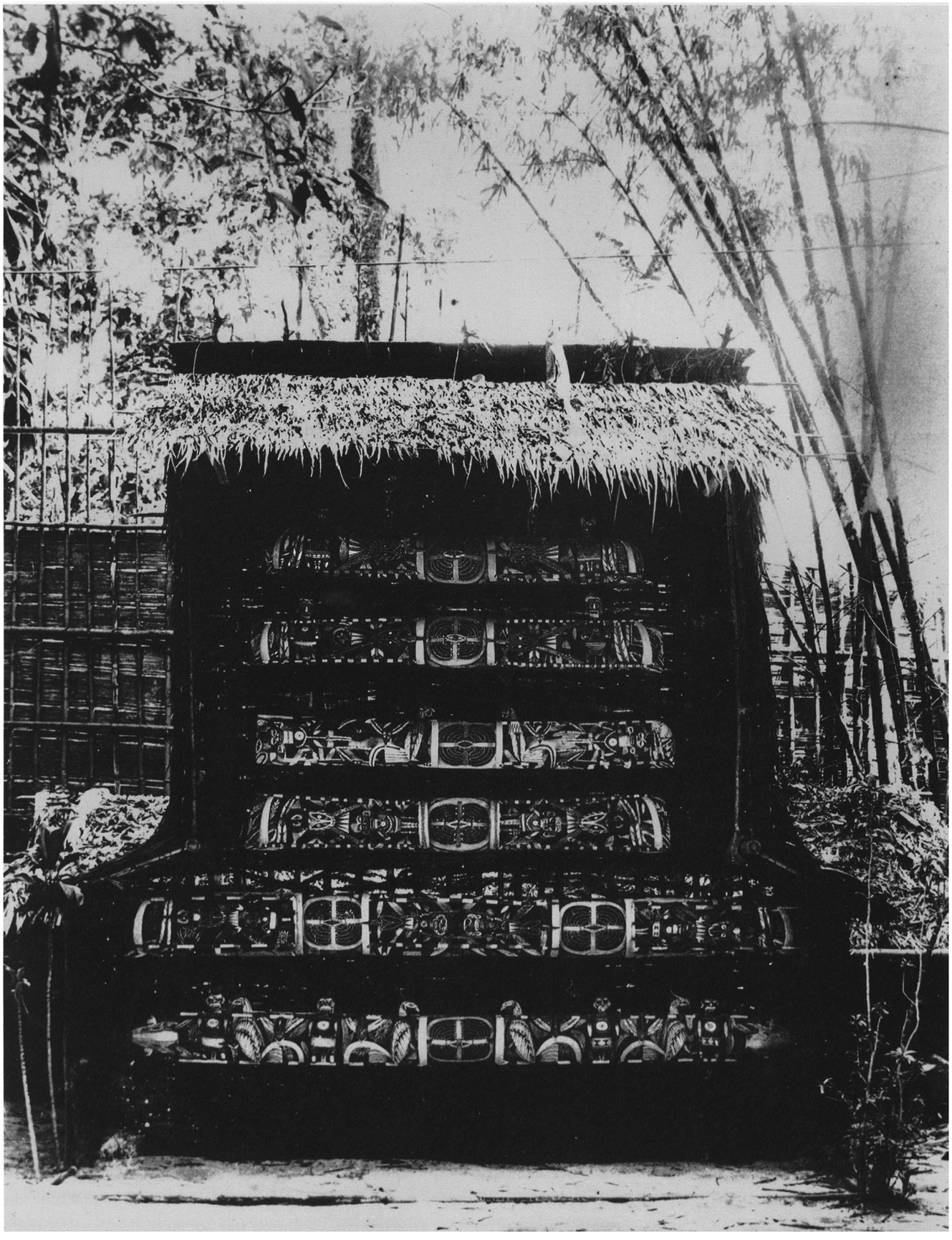
On the Tabar Islands the horizontal *kobo-kobor* is the most significant *malagan* within a sub-clan's ritual property. When the leader's sister's son receives the *kobo-kobor*, then everyone knows that the majority of the sub-clan's *malagan* rights have been put in his charge, and in effect he has become the ritual leader for the sub-clan. Other *malagan* may be more spectacular, but it is the *kobo-kobor* that carries the most weight.

Most *kobo-kobor* are long horizontal wooden objects, carved intricately in three dimensions and painted. In structural form they are bisymmetrical around a central focus; if the *malagan* belongs to the *Valik* Big-Name sub-tradition the central focus may be an "eye of fire."[1] Only *Valik* uses the "eye of fire." If the *kobo-kobor* belongs to another Big-Name sub-tradition then the central focus will most likely be a hole large enough to fit the painted face of a boy standing behind it.

The finials of the *kobo-kobor* generally depict the tusked head of a big-mouth fish, the ultimate reference to death. Occasionally the ends depict the head of a pig instead of the more usual big-mouth fish. Some people say that the pig's head would indicate that the *malagan* originated in an inland bush village. Others point out the fact that the head of the pig is the most significant part when the animal is cooked, and it is the part that is given to the important participants at a *malagan* ceremony. Therefore, the argument goes, a *malagan* sculpture that features the head of a pig as a finial is an important object.

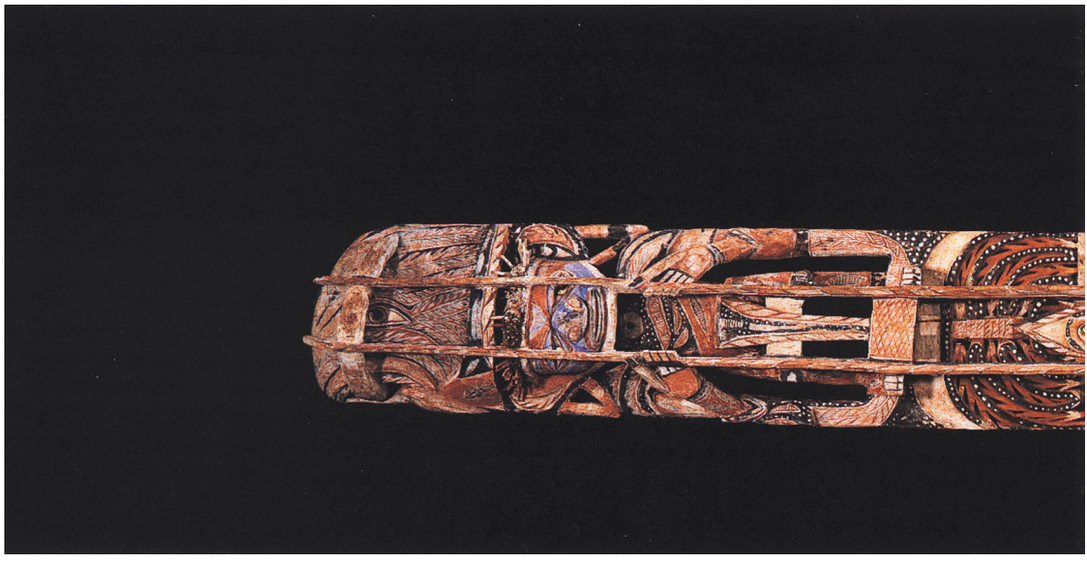
Fig. 48
Malagan display house with six *Valik* horizontal *malagan* objects positioned inside. Sibenmalum hamlet, Lessu village, east coast Notsi region, northern New Ireland.
Photo taken during the 1907–1909 Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

1. The "eye of fire" is called *mata-ling* on Tabar.



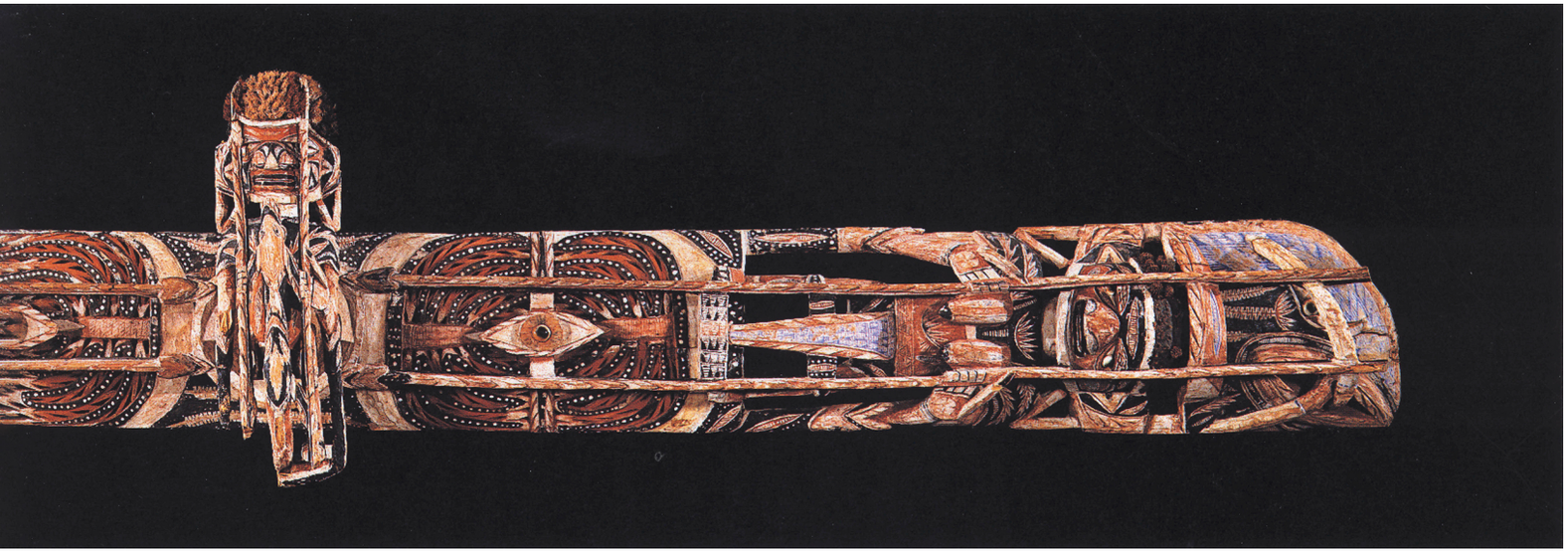
Malagan horizontal sculpture

pl. 74
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
8049
Painted wooden horizontal *malagan* sculpture of the type known on Tabar as *kobokobor si mi Walik*; this one features a large central figure and two "eye of fire" images.
Northern New Ireland, Tabar Islands, Fischer Inseln (now Simberi Island) [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Richard Parkinson, 1893.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment, ultramarine blue paint; seed burrs, pandanus fruit fibrous husks, branchlets, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 38; D: 19; L: 204 cm.



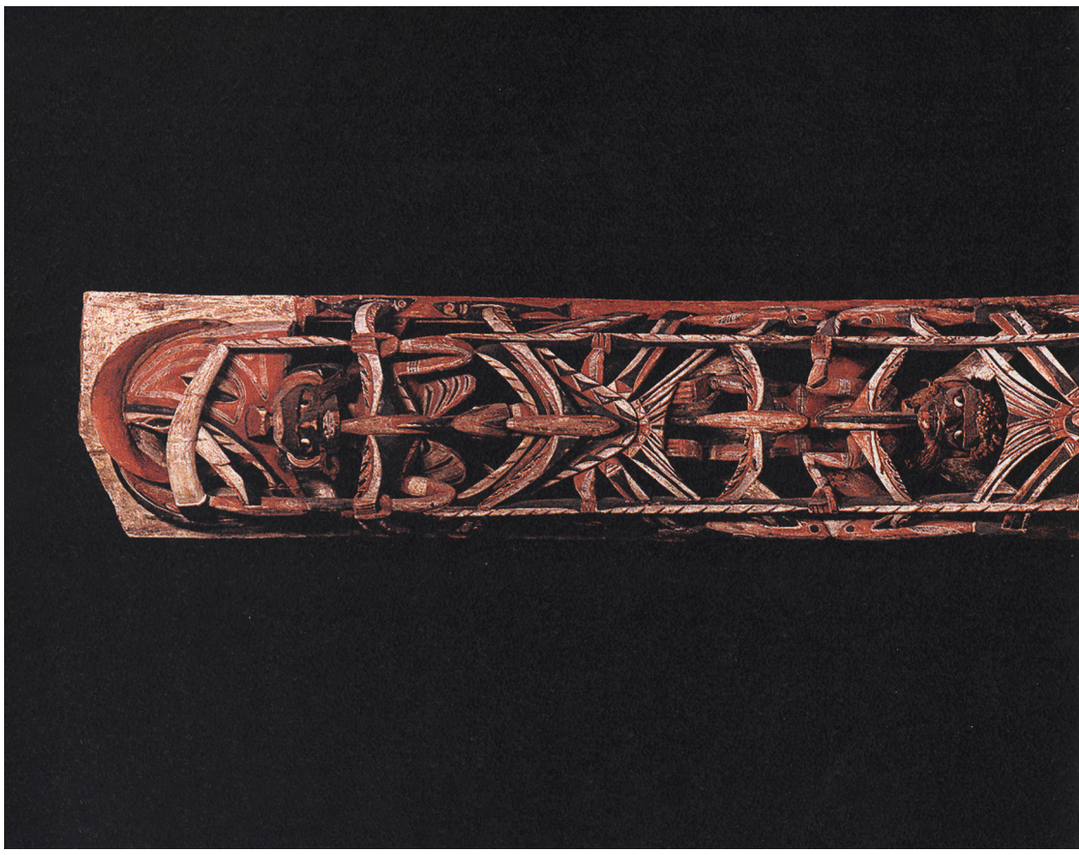
pl. 75
USA, Chicago, Field Museum.
98592
Horizontal bisymmetrical *malagan* frieze depicting two opposed birds with their beaks pointed toward a central hole.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from J. F. G. Umlauff & Co., 1905.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and yellow pigments.
H: 38; W: 170; D: 18 cm.

pl. 76
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 3324
Horizontal bisymmetrical *malagan* frieze; the central figure, depicted with the body missing below the ribs, holds a pair of snakes which link to other snakes held by the roosters at each end of the frieze.
Northern New Ireland [attributed].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Mrs. Farrell, 1892.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre, lime, black pigment; resin, feathers, museum nails.
H: 30; W: 198; D: 9 cm.

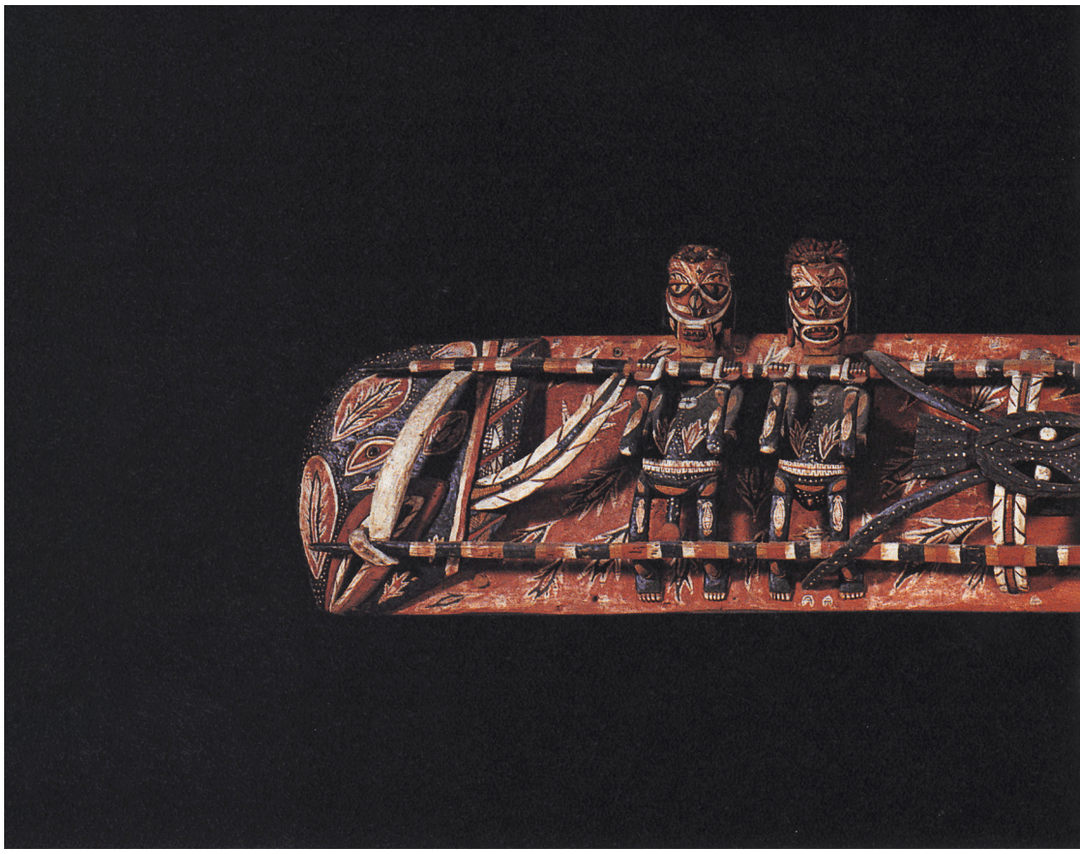


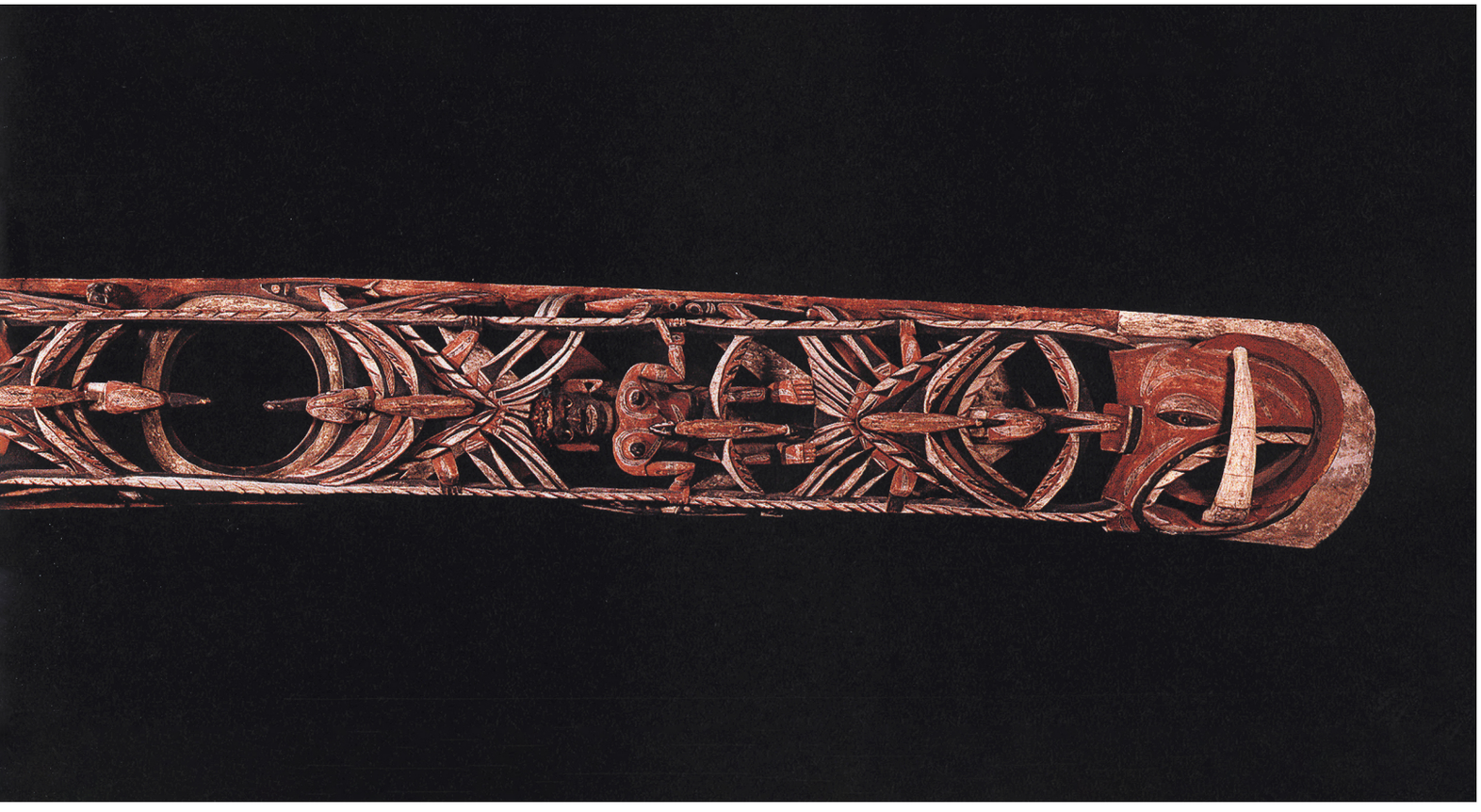
Malagan horizontal sculpture

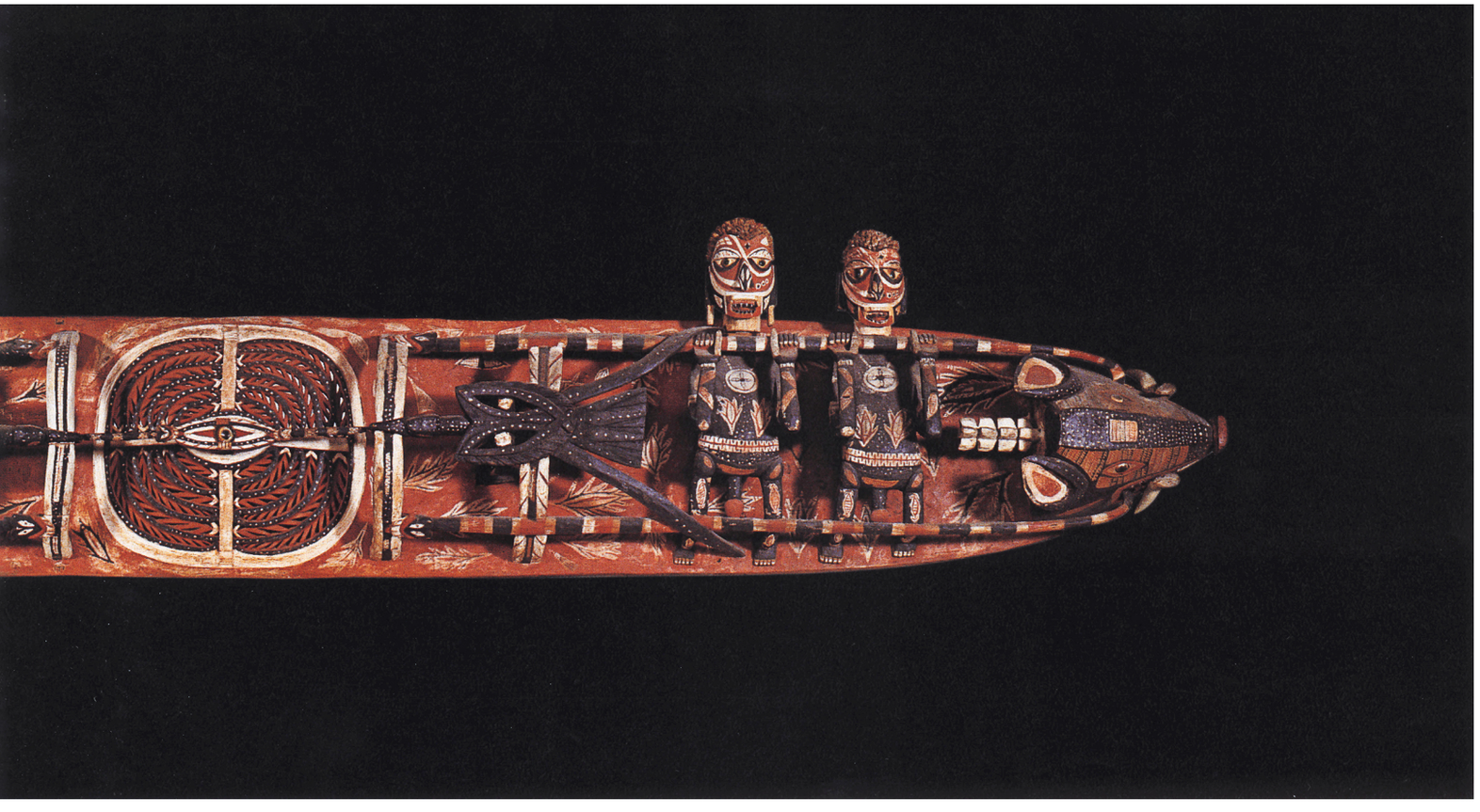
pl. 77
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 57383
Painted wooden horizontal *malagan* sculpture;
the fish or shark-like heads at each end most likely
represent the big-mouth fish which is used as an
image of death.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known;
probably late 19th to early 20th century.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments;
bark-cloth, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*),
pandanus fruit fibrous husks.
H: 40; D: 25; L: 390 cm.



pl. 78
Germany, Bremen, Übersee Museum.
D 14277
Painted wooden horizontal *malagan* sculpture
with a central "eye of fire" and two pairs of figures.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known,
probably late 19th to early 20th century.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, black and yellow pigments;
pandanus fruit husks.
H: 48; D: 17; L: 277 cm.

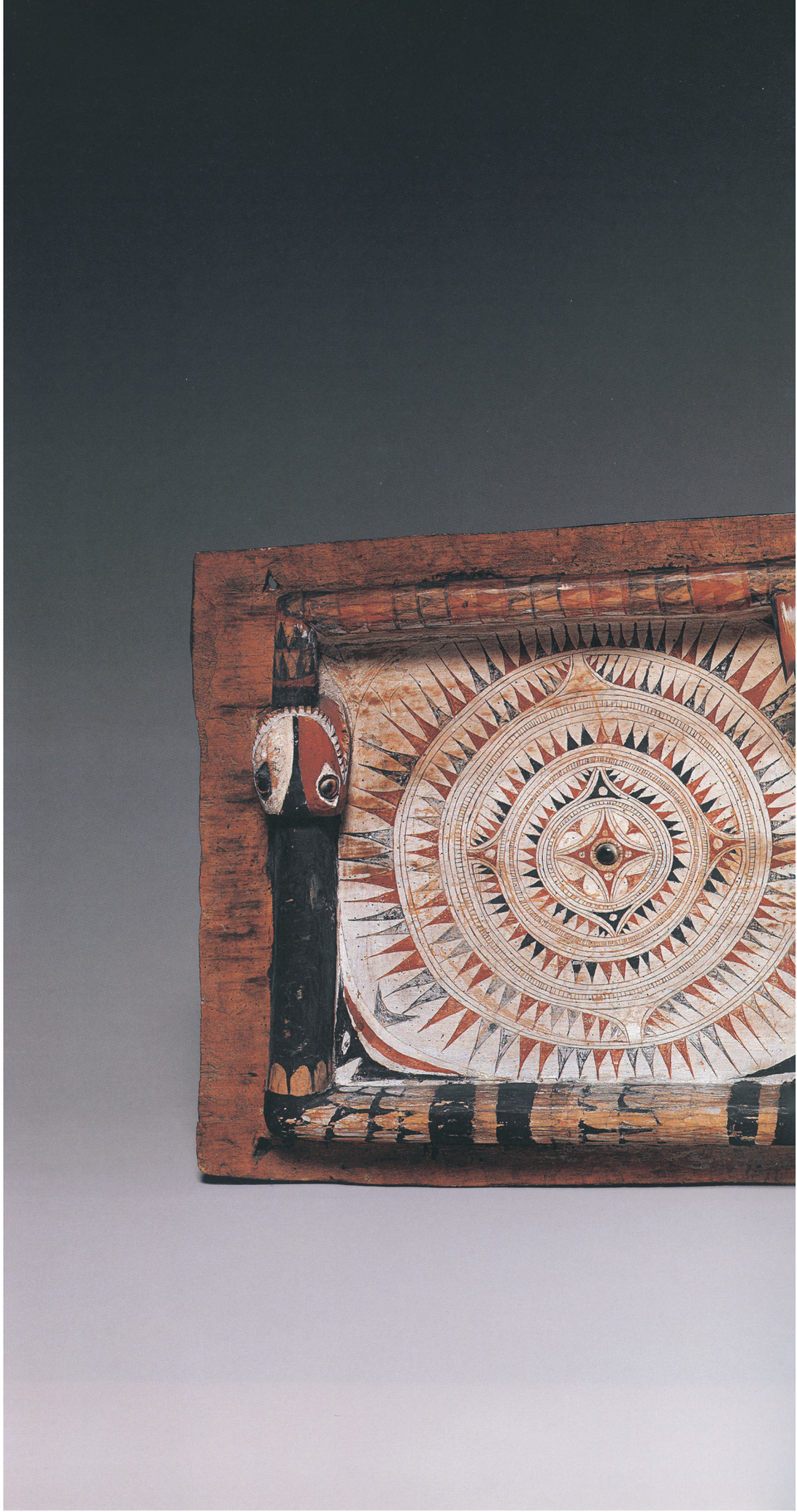






Malagan horizontal sculpture

pl. 79
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
71.1912.1.6
Horizontal *malagan* image carved from wood and featuring a central male figure standing upon a crescent (probably a half moon), against a background of two circular painted images (probably "eyes of the sun").
Northern New Ireland [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Previously owned by Chauvelot. Acquired 1912.
Wood (*Alstonia villosa*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), fiber, seed husks.
H: 57; W: 143; D: 25 cm.



Malagan vertical sculpture

◂ VI.12

Michael Gunn

Tall totem-pole-like *malagan* sculptural objects are known from Tabar as well as from mainland New Ireland. The chief characteristics of these vertical sculptures are two or more figures standing one above the other, each separated by a block-like structure. This type of *malagan* usually includes a representation of a pig's head at the base and a bird at the top. However, as with all things *malagan*, there are exceptions to the rule: St Louis 60:1977 (pl. 82) is a tall vertical malagan that features only one human-like head. The body is represented by other highly ambiguous shapes, many of which appear to be eating each other.

When photographs of various vertical sculptures were shown to malagan experts in New Ireland, there was disagreement about what kind of bird was represented at the top. One man from the village where Berlin VI 34459 (pl. 83) was collected said that the bird was a pigeon, but another man from a neighboring village said it was a hornbill.

Vertical *malagan* can be very complex objects. A man on Tabar described one as the image of a ficus tree that has many aerial roots. In and among the roots is a *ges* wild man, or spirit, reaching down and pulling the tail of a *kuskus* food animal,[1] which is turning its head to see what is disturbing it.

On Tabar the separating partitions between each figure on the vertical sculpture are known as *koltibor* ("pig's belly") and refer to the part of a pig without any bone. A pig bone is a symbol of *malagan* ownership. Painted on the *koltibor* are triangular shapes called *botolingits*, which can mean a barnacle that resembles a clitoris. The motif of barnacles on a pig's belly may originally have referred to a corpse found floating in the sea.

Many of the tall *malagan* feature large circular holes similar to those found on horizontal *malagan*. Up until the early 20th century, young boys could be used as part of the *malagan* display. At the back of the display house a series of platforms allowed the boys to stand and place their painted faces in the central holes of the *malagan* sculptures. They would stay still during the early parts of the performance, and people would think that the faces were part of the *malagan*. At the climax of the ceremony, when ownership of the *malagan* objects changed hands, the boys would move their faces and the entire *malagan* display would appear to come alive.

1. A type of marsupial.

Fig. 49
Climax of a *malagan* ceremony. Mapua area,
Tabar Islands, northern New Ireland.
Photo taken by Edgar Walden during the 1907–1909
Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

◂ **pl. 80**
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 766
Tall vertical *malagan* sculpture of the type called *eikuar* on Tabar; depicting four human-like figures standing one above the other. These were tied to the front of the *malagan* display house during a commemorative *malagan* ceremony. One of a pair.
Northern New Ireland, Gardener Island (now Big Tabar Island) [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Captain Thomas Farrell, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre, lime; aerial rootlet, twine, modeling resin, bark-cloth, hardwood spikes, black resin spatters, sticks, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), split bamboo.
H: 394; W: 26; D: 26 cm.

▸ **pl. 80** (detail)

◂ **pl. 81**
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 767
Tall vertical *malagan* sculpture of the type called *eikuar* on Tabar; depicting five human-like figures standing one above the other. These were tied to the front of the *malagan* display house during a commemorative *malagan* ceremony. One of a pair.
Northern New Ireland, Gardener Island (now Big Tabar Island) [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Captain Thomas Farrell, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre, lime, black pigment; aerial rootlet, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), modeling resin, sticks, twine.
H: 401; W: 23; D: 23 cm.

▸ **pl. 81** (detail)

pl. 82
USA, St. Louis, Saint Louis Art Museum.
60:1977
Painted wooden vertical *malagan* sculpture with a head at the top and a series of bird and fish-like images comprising the body.
Northern New Ireland, possibly Tabar Islands [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Gift of Morton D. May, 1977.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; branchlets, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 240; W: 30; D: 30 cm.

pl. 83
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 34459
Painted wooden vertical *malagan* sculpture with three figures, one on top of the other; the bottom figure stands in the mouth of a fish.
Northern New Ireland, Nalik region, Kafkaf village [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Edgar Walden of the Deutsche Marine-Expedition, 1907–1909.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; rootlets, branchlets, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 255; W: 30; D: 30 cm.

pl. 84
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 30756
Painted wooden vertical *malagan* sculpture with two figures.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired by exchange from the Museum für Völkerkunde zu Berlin, 1910.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; rootlets, branchlets, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 142; W: 26; D: 26 cm.

pl. 85
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
13607
Painted wooden vertical *malagan* sculpture with two figures, one on top of the other; a large branch of betel nuts can be seen at the bottom of the image.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired 1901.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; pandanus fruit fiber, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 173; W: 27; D: 26 cm.

Malagan figure sculpture

Michael Gunn

The human figure is the basic unit of *malagan* sculpture. However, on Tabar at least, a sculptural image that looks like a human is most probably not a portrait of someone. It is rather an inherited *malagan* image used to honor a person who has died.

Several *malagan* figures entered museums as male-female pairs, but it is not known whether they were originally used as pairs or as parts of a larger group of objects. The best-documented set of *malagan* figures are those collected from Kapsu village (Tigak-speaking region on the east coast) by Hugh Romilly in 1883, which are now in the British Museum (see pl. 91 and 92). Vicky Barnecutt's research has shown that six *malagan* figures, each of which is depicted standing in the mouth of a fish, were displayed standing in a canoe in a very elaborate *malagan* enclosure at Kapsu.[1] The canoe, unfortunately, has since been lost.

It is not clear why some animals are depicted in the art of northern New Ireland, and why others are not. Fish, birds, and snakes form a large part of the repertoire, several varieties of lizard are also shown, as is the occasional octopus (see pl. 86). But dogs, sharks, and crocodiles are all missing from the iconography, as are images of non-New Irelanders, including Westerners. Flying fish are probably the most commonly depicted animal, for almost every *malagan* sculpture of a human figure has a flying fish held in front of the body, biting the chin of the main figure. Several *malagan* specialists told us that the flying fish represents the speech of a leader, traveling far.

pl. 86
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 14584
Painted wooden *malagan* figure holding the tentacles of a large octopus which is balanced on its head; a bird (now headless) sits atop the octopus.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known; probably late 19th to early 20th century.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), branchlets, fiber.
H: 125; W: 25; D: 25 cm.

1. The six *malagan* figures (among 51 objects collected by Romilly from Kapsu) form a coherent group and appear to have all been made by the one artist or group of artists. They are registered as Oc.1884,7-28.1, 2, 4, 7, 9, and 49 in the British Museum. (Ref. Vicky Barnecutt, paper given at Pacific Arts Association meeting at the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin, April 2005).

pl. 87
UK, Liverpool, Liverpool Museum.
M 5020 A
Painted wooden *malagan* pregnant female figure.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated by Joseph Mayer, 1867.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre,
black pigment.
H: 48; W: 12; D: 10 cm.

pl. 88
UK, Liverpool, Liverpool Museum.
M 5020 B
Painted wooden male *malagan* figure
with fish heads in silhouette beside face.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated in 1867 by Joseph Mayer.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre,
black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 57; W: 17; D: 17 cm.

pl. 89
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 583
Painted wooden male *malagan* figure with overmodeled face, protruding ribs, large carved *kapkap*, and right leg bent as if walking. Because the artist depicted motion, this figure and his companion (Sydney E 582, pl. 90) are almost unique in the repertoire of figure sculpture from northern New Ireland.
Northern New Ireland, Gardener Island (now Big Tabar Island) [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Captain Thomas Farrell, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and yellow pigments; modeling resin, bast, spongy marine material, hardwood spikes.
H: 73; W: 15; D: 12 cm.

pl. 90
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 582
Painted wooden female *malagan* figure; she appears to be depicted in the act of masturbation, holding her clitoris and breast. Because the artist depicted motion, this figure and her companion (Sydney E 583, pl. 89) are almost unique in the repertoire of normally static figure sculpture from northern New Ireland. Northern New Ireland, Gardener Island (now Big Tabar Island) [published registration data]. Collection date in New Ireland not known. Acquired from Captain Thomas Farrell, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and yellow pigments; spongy marine material, hardwood spikes, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 73; W: 14; D: 12 cm.

pl. 91
UK, London, The British Museum.
Oc.1884,7-28.2
Painted wooden female *malagan* figure standing
in the mouth of a fish; collected as one of six figures
in a canoe *malagan*.
Northern New Ireland, Tigak region, Kapsu village
[attributed VB after Romilly's correspondence].
Collected in New Ireland by H. H. Romilly, 1883.
Donated by the Duke of Bedford, 1884.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments;
human hair, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 123; W: 26; D: 23 cm.

pl. 92
UK, London, The British Museum.
Oc.1884,7-28.9
Painted wooden male *malagan* figure standing in the mouth of a fish; collected as one of six figures in a canoe *malagan*.
Northern New Ireland, Tigak region, Kapsu village [attributed VB after Romilly's correspondence].
Collected in New Ireland by H. H. Romilly, 1883.
Donated by the Duke of Bedford, 1884.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments; branchlets, rootlets, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 115; W: 25 (with arm detached; arm is an extra 8 cm); D: 20 cm.

◂ **pl. 93**
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
71.1903.46.1
Malagan female figure holding a fish-like animal in front of the body; this figure is most likely very old; New Irelanders in 2003 said that it looked as though it had been carved using a rasp made from a finger-like piece of coral.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collected from the Pacific region probably in 1838 by the Amiral Dupetit-Thouars during the voyage of *La Vénus* (1836–1839). Donated by Mme Janolin in 1903 with the attribution "*Idole des Iles del Spirito Santo Océanie occidentale. 1838.*"
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red (probably ochre) and black pigments; traces of adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 47; W: 20; D: 8 cm.

▸ **pl. 94**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
20511
Painted wooden *malagan* figure with an unusually naturalistic body and mask-like head.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Arthur Baessler, 1902.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*); lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 70; W: 16; D: 18 cm.

Malagan sculpture; birds

◂ VI.14

Michael Gunn

By far the widest range of animal representation in *malagan* is that of birds. Some of the most distinctive bird features—such as the heart-shaped facial plumage of owls or the huge beak of the Papuan hornbill—are identifiable even to a Westerner. But most of the birds represented are not as distinctive as those, and even New Irelanders today are usually unable to recognize a bird from its *malagan*-ized image. Another bird depicted in *malagan* recognizable by New Irelanders is the rooster (see pl. 95). The bird in this *malagan* was identified by a Tabar man as a rooster because of the wattles under its beak. Many representations of birds found on *malagan* objects from the 19th century are no longer made, and now we have no way of finding out why one type of bird is depicted and not another.

In certain parts of northern New Ireland, the people identify with birds as clan symbols. For example, in Laraibine village in the Nalik region in 2001 there were at least six bird-based clans, and the people were very precise about the exact species of their bird symbols. One was a small ground-living bird that eats certain seeds; another was a type of sea bird that lives on an island off the west coast of New Ireland. However, it is not certain whether the birds depicted on *malagan* sculpture are clan-based birds or represent something else entirely.

A common motif in the art used in *malagan* of northern New Ireland is a bird grasping a snake. This kind of representation may have originally signified the dominance of one bird clan over its enemies, but we do not know this for sure. It is clear, however, that a symbolic sculptural element is relatively stable. While the original situation—probably a conflict between two groups of people settled in a political solution—is now forgotten, the symbolic reference to it has become a widespread element in *malagan* sculpture.

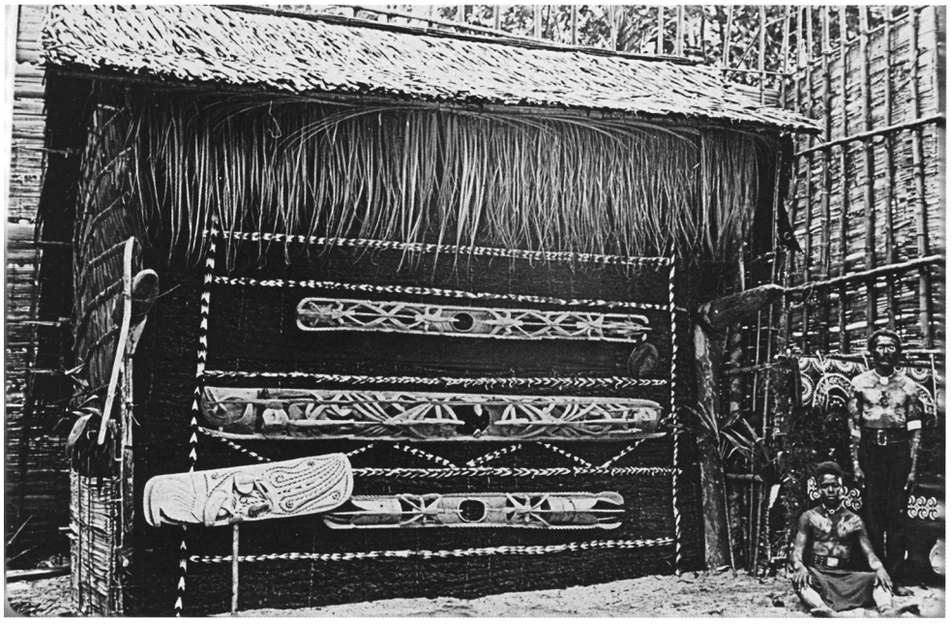


Fig. 50
Malagan ceremony using a horizontal asymmetrical bird frieze that features a hornbill.
Northern New Ireland.
Photo taken by Edgar Walden during the 1907–1909 Deutsche Marine-Expedition.

pl. 95
Netherlands, Amsterdam, coll. Mia and Loed van Bussel.
Horizontal asymmetrical *malagan* sculpture featuring a rooster, which can be identified by the wattles under the neck.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known, probably late 19th or early 20th century.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 37; W: 113; D: 13 cm.

pl. 96
Germany, Köln, Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum. 13281
Horizontal asymmetrical *malagan* sculpture, featuring a rooster-like bird, a second bird biting a snake, and curling leaf shapes.
Northern New Ireland, somewhere between Panoras (now Panaras, west coast Kuot region) and Angriff's Island (now Latangai Island, west coast Kara region). [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Augustus Frings of Nusa Island, northern New Ireland, 1905.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), pandanus fruit fibrous husks.
H: 50.5; W: 152; D: 17.5 cm.

▾ **pl. 97**
USA, Chicago, Field Museum.
98641
Bisymmetrical *malagan* sculpture featuring
a bird holding a snake with its beak and claws.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from J. F. G. Umlauff & Co., 1905.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 26; W: 78; D: 17 cm.

▸ **pl. 98**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 12490
Figure of a bird (probably a hornbill) holding a man.
Northern New Ireland [acquisition data].
Collected in New Ireland by Steinbach, 1895.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 40; W: 20; L: 70 cm.

Malagan sculpture; birds

◂ **pl. 99**
Belgium, Antwerpen (Anvers), Etnografisch Museum.
55.39.2
Painted wooden vertical *malagan* sculpture in the form of a beaked bird's head. The primary image is that of a bird's head; an extension of the eye becomes an arm with a hand cocked against the forehead; above this hand develops a very organic frieze that was probably a portrayal of fertility and growth.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution]. Collection date in New Ireland not known, probably late 19th century. Acquired from Ludwig Brettschneider in 1955.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre, lime, black pigment; pandanus fruit fibrous husks, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 111; W: 38.5; D: 14 cm.

▸ **pl. 100**
USA, Chicago, Field Museum.
138876.1-3
Bird with a body made from bark-cloth over a cane framework and surmounted with a tall wooden head carved and painted in the northern style.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; rattan, bark-cloth.
Collection date in New Ireland not known. Acquired by A. B. Lewis for the museum during 1909–1913.
H: 111; W: 38.5; D: 14 cm.

Mouthpieces

Michael Gunn

Mouthpieces are carved wooden images of birds, fish, or lizards that were held in the mouth of a man,[1] or, more rarely, placed in the mouth of a mask or *malagan* figure. Of the more than 200 mouthpieces in museum collections, around half are realistic representations of the adult male hornbill's head (see pl. 104). The other half are more diverse, but all feature a dynamic animal—often a bird or a lizard—depicted in the act of moving.

Hornbill mouthpieces were used in at least two contexts: they were held in the teeth of men during evocative dance performances famed for their beauty; and they were used as an instrument by a ritual leader during a transfer of ownership ceremony in *malagan*. Field photographs dating from 1908 to the present day show New Ireland men with wooden bird's heads held between their teeth, gesturing like birds with their arms out, moving in harmony with their fellow dancers. Sometimes they danced in small groups of three or four; often there were more than 20. Other photographs show just one or two men taking a leading role during a *malagan* ceremony—thrusting their chests out and holding shell rattles in their outstretched arms, with a wooden hornbill head clenched between their teeth. Unfortunately, we do not know why the hornbill was the bird represented in both contexts, and not some other bird.

We know very little about the dynamic-animal mouthpieces, for most of them were collected without any contextual data, and very few people today know much about them. One distinct sub-type of the dynamic-animal mouthpieces are those that represent a bird as a beak projecting forward from a spiral-like explosion of feathers, giving the overall impression of a bird hiding among leaves.[2] Several other sub-types of the dynamic style feature a bird-headed, four-limbed figure sitting upright and supporting its long beak with its hands (see pl. 106). Another is a four-limbed animal with a tail

Fig. 51
Group of dancers from Namasalang village (west coast Nalik region) holding wooden hornbill mouthpieces as part of a performance depicting the funeral procession and cremation of a young man. Festival at Kontu village, west coast northern New Ireland, July 2001.
Photo taken by Michael Gunn.

1. A number of mouthpieces have tooth marks on the handle.

2. More than 30 of this type are known in museums and private collections.

pl. 101
Denmark, Copenhagen, Nationalmuseet.
Ia.16
Carved and painted wooden mask-like object; made to be held in the dancer's teeth. It was exchanged out of the Australian Museum well before the disastrous Garden Palace fire of 1882 in Sydney destroyed all their earlier New Ireland collections.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known. Acquired from the Australian Museum in Sydney, 1863.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, pigment.
H: 21; W: 48; D: 18 cm.

that curls over its back (see pl. 107). One of the most naturalistic is a mouthpiece that takes the form of an animal peering between a pair of curving fronds (see pl. 103). When shown photographs of this piece, a number of New Irelanders said that it represented a type of lizard.

It is possible that at least some of the dynamic-animal mouthpieces were used as dance accessories in a manner similar to the hornbill mouthpieces, to illustrate stories that featured birds, fish, and lizards. But it is much more likely that they were used to interact with the supernatural world during ritual context. We know that New Irelanders, as strongly today as a century ago, use magic and sorcery to interact on a daily basis with spirits and with each other. It is possible that such objects were used to make a connection to a supernatural world, perhaps to obtain power from a source that had recently died.

pl. 102
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
34418
Painted wooden bird, most likely representing the hornbill; tooth-marks indicate that it was held vertically in the mouth.
Southern New Ireland, in the style of Tanga or Anir Islands [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Missionary Wenzel, Annaberg, 1915.
Wood; lime, ultramarine blue, bright orange, and yellow pigments; feathers, plant material, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
L: 30; W: 7; D: 2.5 cm.

pl. 103
USA, New York, American Museum of Natural History. ST-2236
Painted wooden mouthpiece in the shape
of a forest lizard peering through leaf fronds.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Appleton Sturgis, 1891.
Wood, shell; lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 12; W: 7; L: 27 cm.

pl. 104
Australia, Sydney, Australian Museum.
E 593
Painted wooden mouthpiece, carved in the shape of a hornbill bird's head. These were held between the teeth during specific types of men's dances which were associated with *malagan* ritual performance.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Captain Thomas Farrell, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); red ochre, lime, black pigment; feathers, resin holding feathers, museum glue, nails, and iron spike.
H: 17; W: 5; L: 37 cm.

pl. 105
Switzerland, Basel, Museum der Kulturen.
Vb 10595
Dried hornbill head, probably used as a mouthpiece during performances such as *sokobur* and *bungman*.
Northern New Ireland, Nalik region
[registration data].
Probably collected in New Ireland by
Dr. Alfred Bühler, 1931.
Dried hornbill bird head (*Aceros plicatus*); red ochre; shell (*Turbo petholatus*), bamboo, rattan.
H: 17; W: 6; L: 28 cm.

pl. 106
USA, New York, Brooklyn Museum.
37.2892 PA
Painted wooden mouthpiece, carved in the shape
of a four-legged animal sitting vertically and holding
the beak with its hands; possibly an image of
a lizard with a bird's head.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
On loan in 1937 from New York Historical Society.
Acquired 1950.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre,
black pigment.
H: 17; W: 6.5; L: 46.5 cm.

pl. 107
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
71.1887.31.174
Mouthpiece in the form of a type of lizard that lives on the tops of trees. Above the lizard's back is an image of a flying fox, a type of bat, flying across the lizard. This object was held in the mouth of a man who clenched his teeth on the wooden handle.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated by Roland Bonaparte, 1887.
Wood, shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red-brown-purple and black pigments.
H: 18; W: 5; L: 71.5 cm.

Rainmaking and *malagan*

Michael Gunn

Rainmaking was a well-established practice in northern New Ireland. The connection between the practice of rainmaking and the *malagan* sub-tradition known as *Marada* is of special interest to us because it is there that we find a direct link between a cultural tradition and its ritualized *malagan* version. Most *malagan* sub-traditions have identifiable but often elusive characters. We can understand that *Malagatsak*, for example, is a *malagan* sub-tradition on Tabar that has as its central identity the archetype of a warrior; but many other sub-traditions are more difficult to categorize. *Marada*, by contrast, has a direct link to the cultural tradition of rainmaking.[1]

Rainmaking was conducted by male specialists, and the families of rainmakers passed the secrets from father to son. There were a number of places on New Ireland where specialists practiced the associated art of making the clouds part and the sun reappear.[2] Special locations were designated for conducting the work of rainmaking. Often located near the fence of the enclosure used by the clan, these places were taboo to ordinary people. Some sites were large and complex, with many altars supporting the large white clam shells that served as the main receptacles for the skulls[3] of former rainmakers, often half submerged in water.[4] Other objects used in rainmaking included wooden heads and black stones resembling skulls and painted with images of the sun, rain, rainbow, and lightning. Long, rounded stones used for rainmaking were also used in different contexts to make people feel as though they were not hungry if food was scarce. Other stones could also function in a similar way in feasts when there was not enough food.[5]

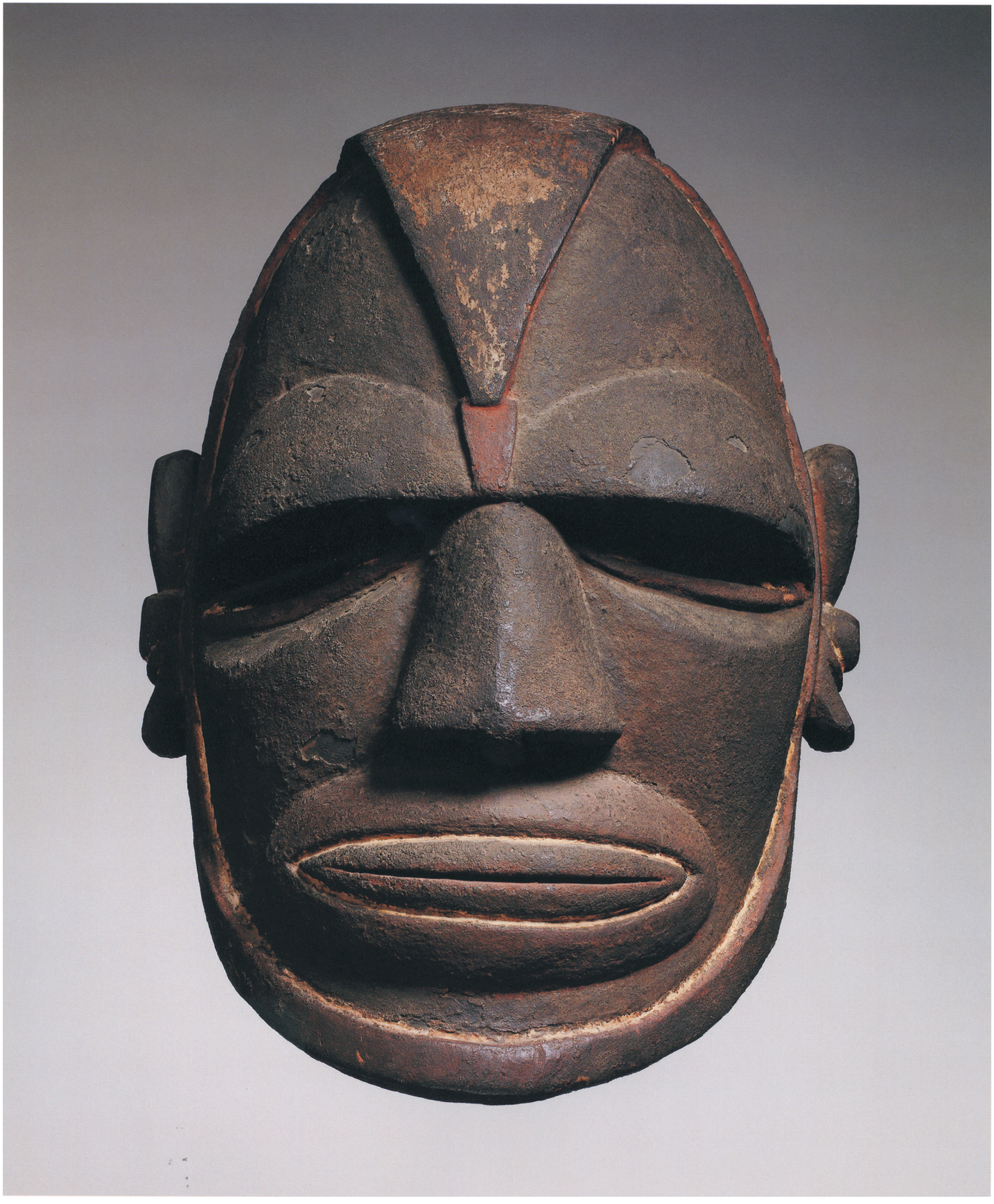
In the *malagan* sub-tradition of *Marada*, painted, hollow wooden heads were placed on a body of bush materials and used in *malagan* ritual context. It is not clear if all of these wooden heads were actually used in *malagan* ceremonies, for it is quite possible that some were part of the rainmaking process. Several figures made from hardwood were found by Augustin Krämer in an old rainmaking grove.[6]

Fifteen of these distinctive heads are known in museum and private collections, and it appears that they were created in three main styles. These can be briefly summarized as: a type with curved jaw (see pl. 108);[7] a type with square nose ring;[8] and a third type with a pig's head at the base. About half were made from a hardwood, the others from easily carved *Alstonia* wood. All were painted black over much of the outer surface.

Probably the clearest portrayal of the link between rainmaking and its *malagan* equivalent was given by Edward Salle of Tatau village on Tabar: "*Kovabat*[9] is the name for the wooden head if it is positioned on a body of bush materials. The word is only the name of the rainmaking; when they use it in *malagan* ritual context the concept is only an image. They use the same songs when they do the real rainmaking. When doing this they wear a dead man's skull and hair and other parts."[10]

pl. 108
France, M. Alain Schoffel.
Head made from hardwood with black encrusted face. These heads were placed on bodies made from bush materials and used in the *malagan* sub-tradition called *Marada* that was associated with rainmaking. They were kept after use, and when needed again they would be washed then repainted.
Northern New Ireland, possibly Tabar Islands [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known; probably late 19th or early to mid-20th century.
Hardwood (*Cordia subcordata*); crusty black pigment, red ochre, traces of lime.
H: 52; W: 48; D: 35 cm.

1. Known as *Marada* on Tabar and variants of *Marendang* in most parts of northern New Ireland.
2. See Krämer-Bannow 1916: 236; Eves 1998: 190, 267.
3. The overmodeled skulls collected from the northern region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were probably not those of rainmakers, but more likely those of clan leaders.
4. Krämer-Bannow 1916: 132, 203-205; Fig. 109.
5. Wesley Kakiso, Fatmilak village, Nalik region 2003.
6. Krämer-Bannow 1916: Fig. 78.
7. Probably from the Tabar Islands.
8. Probably also from the Tabar Islands.
9. *Kovabat* (literally "head-rain") is a carved wooden hollow head used in the sub-tradition of *malagan* known on Tabar as *Marada*.
10. Recorded at Tatau village in 2001.



Malagan taboo-manipulating masks

◂ VI.17

Michael Gunn

Masks are a very important part of ritual activity in northern New Ireland and are used in *malagan* as well as other cultural traditions such as *kepang*. Around half of all art objects collected from New Ireland are masks, and around one third of all masks were made in the distinctive *tatanua* style.[1]

As with other *malagan* objects, the meaning of a mask is not to be found so much in the symbols and other elements that go into its making; rather, the meaning becomes apparent in the mask's use. On northern New Ireland, including Tabar, the use of masks has been recorded in the following contexts:

Funerary masks

On Tabar in the late 20th century, white feather masks were worn during a funerary ceremony that took place not long after a man had died. Men of the dead man's wife's clan wore them when they carried the coffin to the grave. These *tanua* masks represented ancestral spirits at the burial but not the dead person's "soul" or "image"—these concepts were carried by figure sculpture. Several months after the interment, the final ceremony of the burial sequence culminated with the wearing and then destruction of black bark-cloth *tanua* masks, marking the complete separation of the dead person from the living villagers (see fig. 52).

Fundraising masks

Malagan ceremonies are very expensive, and before a major commemorative *malagan* ceremony, men use masks for fundraising. Contributions are solicited by masked men who humorously threaten to set fire to houses, spear the sides of houses at night when people are asleep, surprise people defecating in the bushes, or tickle men with a knife. The extreme techniques of the fundraisers vary, but they are all rigorously prescribed by the rules of each mask.

Cleansing masks

Cleansing masks, generally called *ges* and *pi*, are used during a *malagan*-oriented phase that occurs toward the end of the commemorative period several years after someone has died. When activated by a boss, the clan's gardens are raided by masked men wielding machetes and the gathered food is taken back to the graveyard. The dead man's houses are speared and have stones hurled at them. Senior clansmen are threatened with spears and insulted. These attacks are received with good humor, for they are understood to be part of the reunification of the village broken by the man's death. The masked men's actions remove those things that had belonged to the dead man from his lifeless hand and make them the property of the living. His gardens now belong to those who took them over; his men's house is freed of his influence. The networks that had connected him to everyone in the village were suddenly without a focus when he died, and they needed reweaving. In order to reweave society, the old connections must first be broken and cleared away. This is the work of the cleaners.

1. For discussion of *tatanua* and other non-*malagan* masks see sections II.6, VI.18, and VI.19.

Fig. 52
Malagan men wearing feather masks during the *vavil* funerary procession, part of *Kulepmu malagan*, as they carried the coffin of Pamas to the graveyard. Tatau village, Tabar Islands, northern New Ireland, 1984. *Photo taken by Michael Gunn.*

Cleansing masks such as *ges* are sometimes placed on a body made of bush materials and used in a *malagan* ceremony along with other sculpture. Their presence as a physical object without a human actor is probably understood to be sufficient to carry out their cleansing role.

Taboo-removing masks

Taboo-removing masks are used to repair society. They are large, wooden masks, often with a towering superstructure and ear-planks or "wings" that are used to remove the taboos remaining in a village after someone's death; they also open the graveyard to admit people to attend the final sequence of *malagan* commemorative ceremonies. The ritual specialist ("mouth man") uses only one mask at a time. First he cleans the village of taboos so that people can return to their normal non-mourning lives. Then he has a second even more elaborate mask fitted over his head and, after dancing a silent and solitary dance, he moves forward to chop at the fence surrounding the graveyard. Younger men wearing *ges*, *pi*, and other masks move in to assist him, and within a few minutes the tall, concealing fence is pulled down and the *malagan* display house becomes visible to all. The clanspeople of the dead person can now return to normal life, and the taboo-removing mask is placed in its own display house in the public part of the graveyard.

pl. 109
UK, Cambridge, University Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology. 1890.179
Mask, carved and painted in the northern style; with framed face, bird-and-snake nose-plank, a branch of betel nuts hanging under the mouth and a flying fish touching the tongue. In 2003 this mask was identified variously as: a *kaia* mask used in the *kipang* performance (New Hanover); and a *malagan* mask used to remove taboos (Nalik region). Northern New Ireland [registration data]. Collection date in New Ireland not known. Donated by Professor Sidgwick, before 1890.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; rootlets, fiber, string, bark-cloth, bamboo, cane, fern roots, other plant material.
H: 56; W: 36; D: 41 cm.

◂ **pl. 110**
France, Paris, musée du quai Branly.
71.1930.29.748
Mask, carved and painted in the northern style;
with framed wooden face and attached ear-planks,
featuring a fish protruding from its mouth.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Donated by the Société des Amis du musée
d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro, 1930.
Previously owned by Stephen Chauvet.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*);
red ochre, lime, black pigment; coconut fiber,
cane, feathers, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*),
seedcases, manufactured textile.
H: 64; W: 71; D: 52 cm.

▾ **pl. 111**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
8134
Mask carved and painted in the northern style;
with fretworked wooden face, nose-plank,
and beak-like mouth.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Richard Parkinson, 1895.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime,
red ochre, black and yellow pigments, ultramarine
blue paint; bark-cloth, fiber, bamboo, feathers.
H: 72; W: 28; D: 90 cm.

◂ **pl. 112**
Switzerland, Genève, private collection
Mask with attached ear-planks, carved and painted in the northern style with a strongly developed rooster theme.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Date of collection in New Ireland not known; probably late 19th or early 20th century. Previously owned by Alfred Flechtheim in Berlin, then Charles Ratton in Paris.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), modeling resin (probably beeswax), human hair, pandanus fruit fibrous husks.
H: 70; W: 50; D: 35 cm.

▸ **pl. 113**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 34815
Tall and complex painted wooden mask with human images in the ear-planks; probably a *malagan* mask used to remove taboos from a village or from a *malagan* ritual site.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Völkerkundemuseum Rostock, 1921.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments; unignited matches, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), rootlets.
H: 117; W: 65; D: 30 cm.

◂ **pl. 114**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 12073
Tall painted wooden complex mask that was most likely used in a *malagan* ritual ceremony, surmounted with the carved image of a hornbill's head.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Richard Parkinson, 1895.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments; black seeds, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*).
H: 131.5; W: 26; D: 24 cm.

▸ **pl. 115**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 15156
Malagan mask featuring a bird standing on top of the mask's head, the tail feathers of the bird resemble a hand. This type of mask was most likely used to remove taboos.
Northern New Ireland [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Korvettenkapitän Rüdiger. Acquired 1897.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; fiber.
H: 73; W: 20.5 (excluding ear-planks); D: 31 cm.

Tatanua-style masks [1]

◂ VI.18

Michael Gunn

Tatanua masks from northern New Ireland are characterized by a fiber crest as the central element in the head covering, a thick coating of lime on one or both sides of the crest, and asymmetrical paint in red, black, and white on the carved face. These masks, particularly the early pieces, are full of individual character and seem as if they had been carved to represent specific people.

When northern New Irelanders from a number of regions spoke to us about *tatanua*, it became apparent that the term *tatanua* is a New Ireland Tok Pisin word, probably derived from the Tigak or Kara regions in the north. Further south, masks similar in appearance to the northern examples were known by different names. The *tatanua* style of mask was used as far south as the Barok region.

The relationship between *tatanua* and *malagan* is often disputed. People from Tabar argue that since anyone can dance in public in a *tatanua* mask, therefore it cannot be *malagan*. *Tatanua* is very rare on Tabar, but it is well known on the mainland of northern New Ireland where it is generally linked to *malagan*. In the west coast Madak region *tatanua* masks are used by the wife's clan to end funerary taboos and to open the village after they have wrecked the men's house of a dead man. In this region they say that the performance is *tatanua*, the mask is *malagan*.

Fig. 53
Tatanua from Naiama village. Festival at Kontu, 26 July 2001.
Photo taken by Philippe Peltier.

pl. 116
UK, Norwich, University of East Anglia, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.
UEA 939
Tatanua-style helmet mask with long curving mouth and separately attached ears.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collected in New Ireland by the Methodist Missionary Rev. George Brown, 1875–1880.
Acquired from Hancock Museum, King's College, Newcastle, UK, in 1986; previously in the Bowes Museum, County Durham, before 1954.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*), bamboo, twigs, coconut husk, seed burrs; lime, red ochre, black pigment; bark-cloth.
H: 39; W: 17; D: 38 cm.

Tatanua-style masks [2]

Susanne Küchler

The dances of the last day of *malagan* in the Kara region are divided into those with masks—*tatanua, kipong, rukunau, pinelewau*—and those that do not include masks. All dances are commissioned by the village organizing the *malagan* from other villages.

Of the four masked dances, *tatanua* and *kipong* are the most widespread and well known. *Tatanua* is said to be danced more frequently in the Notsi, Big Tabar and Mandak areas, while *kipong* is danced by the people of the Tigak, and Nalik area. The dances called *rukunau* and *pinelewau* are only remembered by the old, but are not currently performed by the young.

Tatanua is recognizable by its wooden mask, whose wide jaw and over-emphasized teeth are characteristic features, as are the pointed head of the mask, whose hair is colored differently on either side. A red shirt or red bark-cloth is worn by the dancer of *tatanua*. The dance is accompanied by a group of drummers playing on bamboo slit drums and singers. The *tatanua* has to move to the vibration of the red *tanget* leaf carried in the outstretched arm.

The dance begins with a single dancer; then two dancers approach each other, joined by another four or six. The group of dancers can divide into units of three or four, to finish the dance in the positioning of two units facing each other. After the dance, the participants have to take part in the ritual washing.

Kipong, in the Kara region, is a mask made out of the branch of a sago palm, with its large ears made out of bark-cloth and a stiff type of cane. The mask represents the beings of the bush who populate the myths of the people of New Hanover, Tigak, Kara, Nalik, Tabar, and Notsi. *Kipong* appear at the time of the food distribution with baskets and demand a share from their female relatives.

pl. 117
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
63002
Tatanua-style helmet mask with detached inverted crescent eyes that become snakes; conical shells form part of head decoration.
Northern New Ireland, eastern Kara-Nalik region, Lakurumau village [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Arthur Krockenberger, Katu Plantation, east coast Kara region, New Ireland, 1909.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments; coconut husk, manufactured textile, paper, cardboard, sticks, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), sea shells, fiber, cane.
H: 46; W: 18; D: 44 cm.

◂ **pl. 118**
USA, New York, American Museum of Natural History.
ST-2202
Helmet mask made in the northern style; depicted with a crab on the nose.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Appleton Sturgis, 1891.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and red pigments; adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), fiber, bark-cloth, cane.
H: 34; W: 20; D: 38 cm.

▸ **pl. 119**
UK, London, The British Museum.
Oc.+5073
Helmet mask carved and painted in the northern style; with white smile painted on the face, human hair beard; use-wear suggests a missing nose-plank.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Noldwritt Collection; purchased from G. R. Harding, Christy Fund, 24 April 1891.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; palm leaf, bark-cloth, split bamboo or cane, feathers, human hair, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), spongy marine material.
H: 30; W: 29.5; D: 33 cm.

Non-*malagan* northern masks

Michael Gunn

In 2001 and 2003 we showed photographs of 19th-century masks to people in New Ireland who helped us realize that the northern New Ireland art style is used in two different contexts: *malagan* and non-*malagan.*

There is a long and well-established tradition of competitive secular dancing found throughout all of New Ireland, and masks are created for many different types of performance in the northern region.[1] Dance groups of men or women[2] practice in secret and prepare every detail.[3] In 1929 the anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker documented one group after another coming to the village plaza at Lesu (east coast Notsi region) to perform public dances associated with a major *malagan* ceremony. Some dances were performed without masks, others used masks. One non-*malagan* dance that had been taught to them by a man from New Hanover featured two lines of men wearing owl masks.

Other kinds of non-sacred performance in the northern region that use masks include *kipang, bual, bot, kuleptaina,* and *tatanua.* In 2003 the mask Berlin VI 1265 (pl. 125) was identified by several men on New Hanover as a mask from a bual performance.[4] Bual's warrior context has its origins deep in the pre-colonial period. Some of the performances depict how birds catch fish. To represent this activity, a man would observe how a bird hunts a fish and then compose the dance movements. He would later return to the village and organize a bual performance for 8 to 12 men. The bual mask pictured here incorporates a combination of bird and fish images—the sides of the face are the fish, and the nose-plank and the crest at the top of the mask represent the bird.

A particular style of mask, with a central nose-plank and a squared "frame" on each side of the face (see pl. 109), was frequently identified on the Tabar Islands as a type of *ges* mask. *Ges* images are an integral and widespread part of *malagan.* On New Hanover these "framed masks" were identified not as *malagan* but as *kaia* masks that were used in the non-*malagan* performances called *kipang.* This information indicates that several different cultural traditions were associated with the same northern New Ireland art style. But it also made clear that there is some similarity in the role the *ges* image plays in *malagan* ritual and *kipang* performance. Both represent near-humans, with *kipang* living in caves and *ges* usually found in trees. New Irelanders recognize *kipang* and *ges* as people who change their faces, and that both are, in some sense, the wild counterparts of humans.

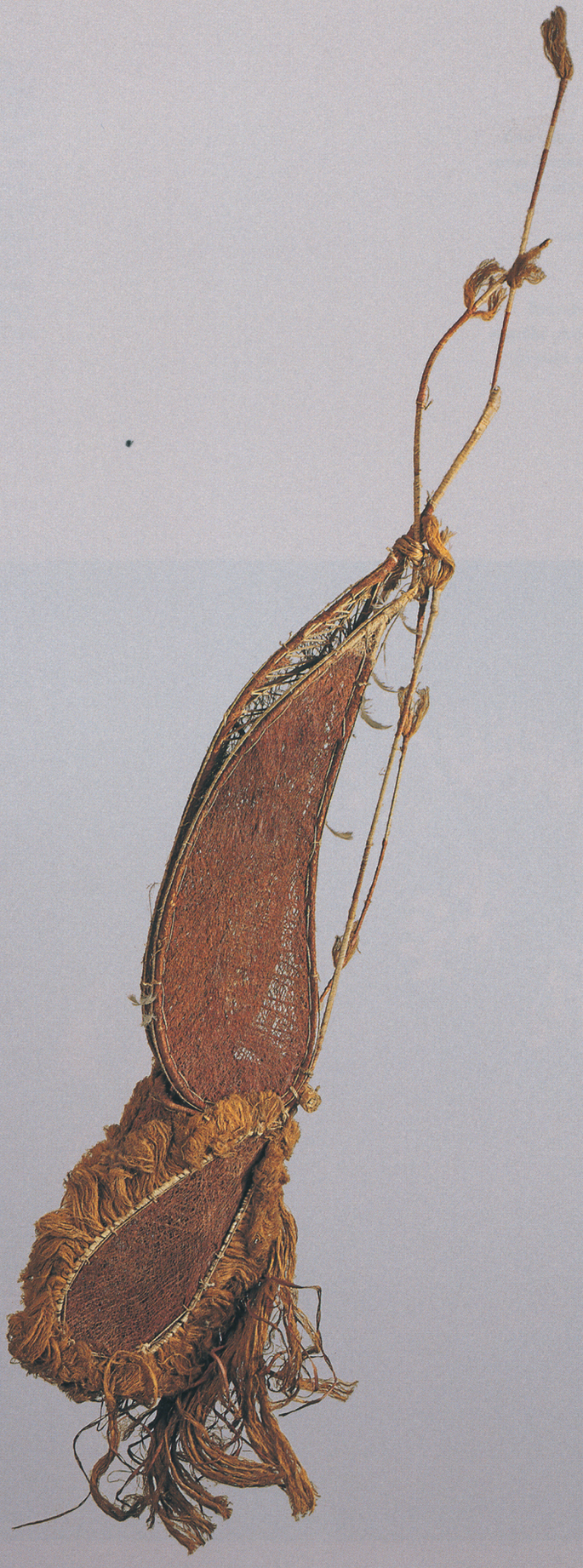
pl. 120
Germany, Göttingen, Völkerkundliche Sammlung der Universität.
Oz 812
Bark-cloth mask with no facial features.
Northern New Ireland, or Duke of York Islands, or Gazelle Peninsula in East New Britain [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Wilkens, 1887.
Cane, bamboo, bark-cloth, fiber; red pigment; chicken feathers.
H: 14; W: 28; L: 110 cm.

1. Competitive dancing is found throughout all regions of Island Melanesia, including New Britain, New Ireland, Manus, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia.

2. Traditional dance groups consist of either men or women performers, with distinctly different styles of dance for each sex. There are usually between 8 and 30 performers in each group.

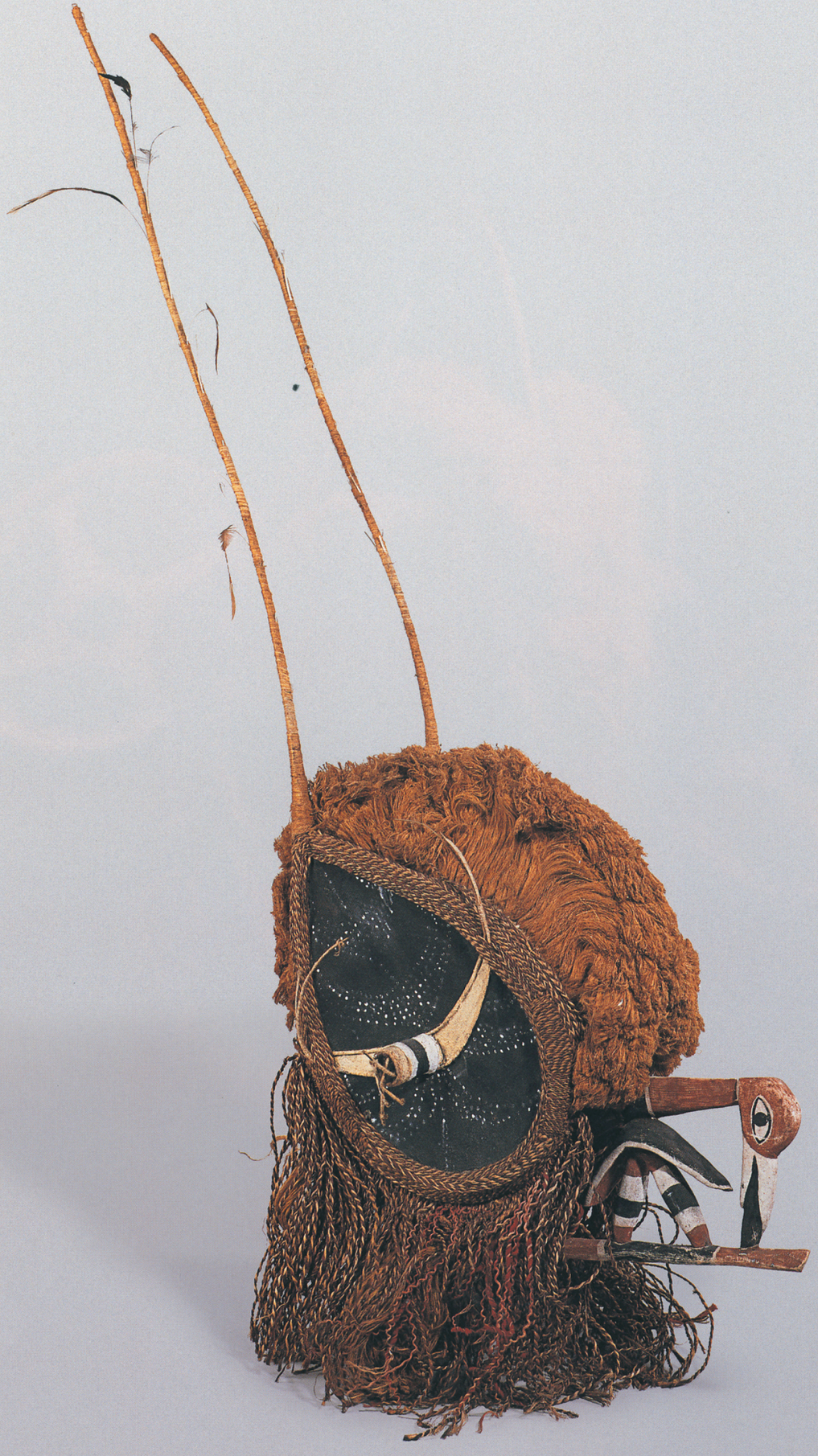
3. See Denner's paper on performative aesthetics in this volume.

4. But it was also identified by another New Hanover man as a *kulep* mask used in the performance *kuleptaina.* One thing is clear—there is no such thing as one reality in New Ireland's past. Anything can have multiple interpretations.



▾ **pl. 121**
Germany, Stuttgart, Linden-Museum.
S. 40141
Bark-cloth mask created in the northern style; with wooden nose and eyes, hair made from painted cone-shaped objects; and a fish attached under the nose.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG].
Collection date in New Ireland not known, probably late 19th or early 20th century.
Acquired from Serge Brignoni.
Bark-cloth; lime, red ochre, black pigment; shell (*Turbo petholatus*), spiral shells, algae or lichen, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), wood (*Alstonia scholaris*).
H: 28; W: 19; D: 41 cm.

▸ **pl. 122**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 13521
Bark-cloth mask with small round painted bark-cloth ears and a wooden fretwork crest at the top of the head.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from J. F. G. Umlauff, 1896.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), bark-cloth, rootlets, split bamboo, cane, fiber; lime, red ochre, black pigment.
H: 18; W: 15.5; D: 25 cm.



◂ **pl. 123**
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde. 8135
Bark-cloth mask made in the northern style, with a wooden nose-plank carved in a bird-like image.
Northern New Ireland [registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Given by Richard Parkinson, 1895.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), bark-cloth, fiber, string; lime, red ochre, yellow and black pigments; chicken feathers, bamboo, manufactured textile.
H: 110; W: 16; D: 47 cm.

▸ **pl. 124**
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum. VI 2827
Mask made in the northern style; a wooden fish, tail up, forms each side of face; the nose-plank features a bird and a snake.
Northern New Ireland, probably Tigak or Kara regions [published attribution].
Collected in New Ireland 1879–1880 by Hernsheim & Co. Acquired 1880.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; bark-cloth, fiber, cane, leaf, feathers.
H: 32.5 (excluding aerials); W: 25; D: 53 cm.

pl. 125
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 1265
Composite helmet mask created in the northern style; with wooden nose-plank featuring bird and fish images. It was most probably made for use in one of the *bual* performances which features a bird and a snake.
Northern New Ireland, Lavongai Island, NW coast (149° 54' 6" E & 2° 26' 5" S) [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Kapit.-Lieut. H. Strauch of the S.M.S. *Gazelle,* 1875.
Bark-cloth, shell (*Turbo petholatus*), bamboo, feathers, wood (*Alstonia scholaris*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; spongy marine material, rootlets, cane, string.
H: 40; W: 12.5; D: 38 cm.

◂ **pl. 126**
USA, Salem, Peabody Essex Museum.
E 25407
Mask-like hollowed head carved and painted in the northern style; it was most likely worn with the dancer's teeth gripping the wooden projection that can be seen inside the head. Probably very old.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Registered 1946. Acquired from Andover-Newton Theological School.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and brown pigments.
H: 57; W: 12.5; D: 14 cm.

▸ **pl. 127**
UK, Scotland, Greenock, McLean Museum & Art Gallery.
1981.1447
Composite mask carved in the northern style, with horizontal wooden frieze and double crest on top of head.
Northern New Ireland [attributed MG & PP].
Collected in New Ireland and given to the McLean Museum by either Robert L. Younger (owner of ship *Gulf of Genoa*) or Captain Swann c. 1894. Registered in 1981.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), fiber, manufactured textile, feathers; lime, red ochre, ultramarine blue and black pigments; cane, bamboo, bark-cloth, string.
H: 40; W: 48; D: 40 cm.

pl. 128
Hungary, Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum.
13437
Wooden mask carved and painted in the northern style in the form of a pig's head.
Northern New Ireland [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Giovanni Bettanin, 1897–1898.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black and blue pigments; manufactured textile, fiber.
H: 51; W: 34; D: 31 cm.

pl. 129
Hungary, Budapest, Néprajzi Múzeum.
13440
Bark-cloth mask, made and painted in the northern style.
Northern New Ireland [published attribution].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from Giovanni Bettanin, 1897–1898.
Bark-cloth, palm leaf, cane; lime, red ochre, black pigment; rootlets, string.
H: 35; W: 33; D: 36 cm.

pl. 130
Germany, Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum.
VI 1490
Painted wooden northern-style mask featuring large horizontal fish as ears.
Northern New Ireland, northwest coast between Kaut (west coast Tigak region) and Lemau (west coast Madak region) [published field data].
Collected in New Ireland by Kapit.-Lieut. H. Strauch of the S.M.S. *Gazelle,* 1875.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*); lime, red ochre, black pigment; spongy marine material, bark-cloth, adhesive putty (*Parinarium laurinum*), cane.
H: 44; W: 97; D: 28.5 cm.

pl. 131
Germany, Dresden, Museum für Völkerkunde.
7173
Wooden mask carved in the northern style;
the naturalistic face is overmodeled in beeswax
and has four bark-cloth ear-planks; features
a nautilus shell on top of the head.
Northern New Ireland [published registration data].
Collection date in New Ireland not known.
Acquired from J. F. G. Umlauff, Hamburg, 1887.
Wood (*Alstonia scholaris*), shell (*Turbo petholatus*),
bark-cloth, cane; lime, red ochre, black pigment;
beeswax, bast material, spongy marine material,
nautilus shell, palm leaf, seed burrs.
H: 44; W: 48; D: 29 cm.

New Ireland Art in Museum Collections

Michael Gunn

Over the decade during which we were developing the ideas for this exhibition and catalogue we located or received information about more than 17,000 non-archaeological objects of human manufacture that had originated in New Ireland. These are in 123 public museums and 65 private museums or private collections. Undoubtedly there are more, perhaps another 8,000 pieces, giving a total of around 25,000 New Ireland objects in non-New Ireland collections[1]. Most New Ireland objects were collected without geographic provenance, and very few had been acquired with the indigenous name. Only 5% of all objects have reliable geographic provenance; most of these were collected in the early 20th century. Sadly, the remaining 95% are attributions.

Public institutions known to hold New Ireland objects:

South Australian Museum, Adelaide, Australia.
682 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Edgar Waite. Field collection 1918 (496 items).

Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Australia.
205 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- H. G. Chater. Acquired 1883.
- C. Mills. Acquired 1884.
- Sir Arthur H. Palmer. Acquired 1886.
- Queensland Commission. Acquired 1887.
- Rev. R. H. Rickard. Acquired 1887, 1890.
- Department of the Queensland Home Secretary. Acquired 1914.

Australian National Gallery, Canberra, Australia.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

National Museum of Australia, Canberra, Australia.
At least 13 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Northern Territory Museum and Art Gallery, Darwin, Australia.
At least 127 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Michael and Bee Gunn. Field collection 1982, 1983-1984.

1. This estimate was reached after analysing the most well-researched group of New Ireland objects—the *uli* figures. Of these the location of two thirds is known, the other one third have been recorded or published but their present location is unknown.

◂ **pl. 2** (detail, see p. 31)

Tasmanian Museum, Hobart, Australia.
At least 41 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1875-1880.

Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston, Australia.
At least 11 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1875-1880.

Museum Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.
291 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Australian War Memorial. Acquired 1925 (50 items).

Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia.
1,598 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
The disastrous Garden Palace fire of 1882 destroyed an earlier collection dating from before 1860.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Captain Francis Lawry, *Annie C. Lynn*. Acquired 1883 (6 items).
- Captain Leeman. Acquired 1883 (8 items).
- J. Weisser. Acquired 1883 (62 items).
- Captain Farrell. Acquired 1884, 1885, 1887 (405 items).
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1884, 1885 (30 items).
- Captain Carpenter. Acquired 1892 (61 items).
- Mrs. Emma Farrell (Queen Emma). Acquired 1892 (44 items; possibly 82 items).
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1870-1880. Acquired 1895 (147 items).
- Rev. R. H. Rickard. Acquired 1899, 1932 (21 items).
- Captain Haug, New Guinea Company. Acquired 1909 (23 items).
- A. B. Lewis. Acquired 1911, 1912 (41 items).
- R. Holdsworth. Field collection. Acquired 1932 (8 items).
- F. L. S. Bell. Field collection 1930s. Acquired 1969, 1990 (10 items).
- Captain F. J. Bayldon. Acquired 1949 (30 items).
- Mrs. Jean McKay Moriarty. Acquired 1990 (31 items).

Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.
Around 45–60 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- James Cockerell (traveled with Rev. George Brown, 1875-1876).
- William John Macleay. His collection was assembled 1875-1889.
- J. Brazier, HMS *Blanche*, 1872
- Ray Sheridan. Collected 1960s.

Museum für Völkerkunde, Wien (Vienna), Austria.
At least 450 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Ludwig Schiffmann. Acquired 1880.
- Otto Finsch. Acquired 1887, 1908, 1914.
- Johann Hassner. Acquired 1898.
- Franz Ferdinand von Osterreich-Este. Field collection 1892-1893. Acquired 1928.
- Andreas Reischek. Acquired 1891.
- Dr. Alexander Kukic, medical doctor on S.M.S. *Fasana*. Acquired 1895, 1899.
- S.M.S. *Fasana*. Field collection. Acquired 1895.
- Rudolf Pöch. Acquired 1907.
- Hans Meyer. Acquired 1918.
- J. F. G. Umlauff or Museum Umlauff, Hamburg. Acquired 1918.
- Hanns Peter. Field collection 1969, 1974, 1981.

Etnografisch Museum, Antwerpen (Anvers), Belgium.
Twelve objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original sources include:
- Henri Pareyn. Acquired 1919 (3 items).
- Ch. Hemeleers. Acquired 1925 (3 items).

University of Ghent, Ghent, Belgium.
At least six objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium.
42 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Nearly all were transferred from the Royal Museums of Art and History, Bruxelles, in 1967 and 1979.

Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.
Ten objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures, Praha (Prague), Czech Republic.
At least 13 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, Denmark.
136 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Frederik VII's Vaabensamling. Acquired 1849, 1864.
- Australian Museum, Sydney. Acquired by exchange in 1863, 1864, 1930.
- H. W. Ravnkilde. Acquired 1878.
- Captain C. A. Pöhl, Hamburg. Acquired 1884, 1885, 1889, 1890, 1893.
- Ferdinand Bruun. Acquired 1887.
- Professor Enrico Hillyer (Henry) Giglioli (ornithologist), Pisa, Italy. Acquired 1888.
- I. I. Wroblewsky. Acquired 1888.
- Riedewaldt. Acquired 1888.
- J. F. G. Umlauff or Museum Umlauff, Hamburg. Acquired 1893.
- E. Hintz. Acquired 1926.
- Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig. Acquired 1932.
- Monsun Expedition 1934.
- Carl Kjersmeier. Acquired 1940.
- The Noona Dan Expedition. Acquired 1962.

National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, Eire.
Objects from New Ireland are said to exist in the collection.

Museum d'Histoire naturelle, La Rochelle, France.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection.

Museum d'Histoire naturelle, Lille, France.
Nineteen objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Musée d'Arts africains, océaniens, amérindiens, Marseille, France.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection.

Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France.
85 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin, Germany.
More than 4,227 objects from New Ireland and New Hanover are known from registration data.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- A. B. Meyer. Acquired 1873.
- Kapitänleutnant H. Strauch, S.M.S. *Gazelle*. Acquired 1876.
- Hernsheim and Co. Acquired 1880.
- J. F. G. Umlauff or Museum Umlauff, Hamburg. Acquired 1882.
- Otto Finsch. Field collection 1879-1882. Acquired 1883.
- Ribbe. Field collection 1893-1894. Acquired 1895.
- Korvettenkapitän Rüdiger. Acquired 1897.
- S.M.S. *Möwe*. Acquired 1899, 1900.
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1901.
- Franz Boluminski. Acquired 1903.
- F. E. Hellwig. Acquired 1904.
- Scharf and Kayser. Acquired 1904.
- Dr. Emil Stephan, S.M.S. *Möwe*. Acquired 1904.
- Dr. Otto Schlaginhaufen, Deutsche Marine-Expedition. Field collection 1907-1909.
- Georg Friederici. Deutsche Marine-Expedition. Field collection 1907-1908.
- Dr. Richard C. Thurnwald. Acquired 1907.
- Edgar Walden, Deutsche Marine-Expedition. Field collection 1907-1909.

Städtisches Museum, Braunschweig, Germany.
Around 65 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Leutnant von Holzendorff. Acquired 1884.

- Adolf Buddig, seaman on the S.M.S *Sperber*. Acquired 1896.
- Korvettenkapitän Rudolf Habenicht of the S.M.S *Möwe*. Collected 1899-1901.
- Generalmajor Stachow. Acquired 1928.

Übersee Museum, Bremen, Germany.
Around 400 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Karl Nauer. Acquired 1911.

Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Germany.
At least 10 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Museum für Völkerkunde, Dresden, Germany.
Around 470 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Museum Godeffroy. Acquired 1879.
- Kapitän Pöhl. Acquired 1882.
- J. Weisser. Acquired 1883.
- J. F. G. Umlauff or Museum Umlauff, Hamburg. Acquired 1887.
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1893-1897.
- Dr. Arthur Baessler. Acquired 1894.
- Korvettenkapitän Kurtz. Acquired 1908.
- Rudolph. Acquired c. 1910.
- Dr. Otto Schlaginhaufen, Deutsche Marine-Expedition. Field collection 1907-1909. Acquired by exchange with Museum für Völkerkunde Berlin 1911.
- Max Enders, a German planter in the Bismarck Archipelago, before 1918.

Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Museum für Völkerkunde, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
At least 144 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Dr. Carl Gerlach. Field collection 1880.

Adelhausermuseum Natur- und Völkerkunde, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Kapitänleutnant Weber (S.M.S. *Cormoran*). Acquired 1912.

Völkerkundliche Sammlung der Universität, Göttingen, Germany
21 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Museum Godeffroy. Acquired 1886.
- Wilkins. Acquired 1887.
- Gerstung. Acquired 1890.
- Köhler. Acquired 1909-1912.
- Walden. Acquired 1910.
- Angenheister. Acquired 1950.
- Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin (objects collected by Boluminski, Schlaginhaufen, S.M.S. *Möwe*, Hernsheim, Parkinson, Scharf und Kayser, Thurnwald).

Hamburg Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg, Germany.
More than 200 objects (possibly more than 1,000) from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Museum Godeffroy. Acquired c. 1870-1888.
- R. J. Robertson. Acquired 1884, 1900.
- Franz Emil Hellwig. Acquired 1905.
- Südsee-Expedition 1908-1910. Field collectors Dr. Wilhelm Müller, Franz Emil Hellwig, Hans Vogel, Prof. Dr. Friedrich Fülleborn, Dr. Otto Reche, Franz Boluminski.

Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover, Germany.
179 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Hofschläger, merchant from Hannover. Acquired 1887.
- Lotsch, medical doctor working with the navy. Acquired 1896.
- Bruno Mencke, an adventurer. Acquired 1900.
- Rudolf von Bennigsen, colonial officer. Acquired 1902, 1920.

- Captain Ahlborn. Acquired 1904.
- Wilckens, medical doctor from Hannover. Acquired 1905.
- Captain Mathaei. Acquired 1918.
- Konietzko, dealer in ethnographic objects in Hamburg. Acquired 1927.

Völkerkundemuseum der von Portheim-Stiftung, Heidelberg, Germany.
23 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Roemer- und Pelizaeus Museum, Hildesheim, Germany.
A number of objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Museum Godeffroy. Acquired 1879.

Museum für Völkerkunde der Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel, Germany.
A number of objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln, Germany.
More than 1,000 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig, Germany.
At least 529 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Hernsheim and Co. Acquired 1880.
- Museum Godeffroy. Acquired 1885.
- Franz Boluminski. Acquired 1908.
- Dr. Otto Born. Collected 1908-1909.
- Kapitän Karl Nauer. Acquired 1913.

Völkerkundesammlung, Lübeck, Germany.
Around 175 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Robertson & Hernsheim, Hamburg. Acquired 1889.
- Mr. F. Thiel. Acquired 1894.
- Captain Supmer, Rostock. Acquired 1912-1913.
- Mr. Wendt. Acquired 1905.

Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum, Mannheim, Germany.
Thirteen objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Philipps-Universität, Marburg, Germany.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection.

Museum für Völkerkunde, München, Germany.
At least 54 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Dr. Christian Schneider, S.M.S. *Albatross,* 1882-1883. Acquired 1887.
- Dr. Max Buchner. Acquired 1890.
- Dr. Albert Hahl. Acquired 1910.
- Karl Nauer. Acquired 1912.
- Franz Boluminski. Acquired 1913.

Sammlung der Missionsschwestern vom Hlst. Herzen Jesu, Münster-Hiltrup, Germany.
More than 35 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- P. Gerhard Peekel

Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde. Seebüll, Neukirchen, Germany.
Seven objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Emil Nolde. Collected 1913-1914.

Naturhistorische Gesellschaft, Nürnberg, Germany.
At least 19 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Albert Hahl. Acquired 1905-1913.

Heimatmuseum, Obergünzburg, Germany.
At least eight objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Kapitän Karl Nauer. Field collection 1913-1914.

Landesmuseum für Natur und Mensch, Oldenburg, Germany.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Graf von Baudissin. Field collection 1887.

Linden-Museum, Stuttgart, Germany.
More than 430 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rudolf von Bennigsen. Acquired 1901.
- Franz Boluminski. Acquired 1903.
- Kolonial Museum, Berlin.
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1903.
- Albert Hahl. Acquired 1906, 1907, 1910.
- Max Thiel. Acquired 1907.
- Wilhelm Wostrack. Aquired 1908
- Augustin Krämer. Field collection 1908-1909.
- Kapitän Haug. Acquired 1909, 1910.
- Arthur Krockenberger. Acquired 1909.

Völkerkunde-Sammlung der Universität Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany
Several objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte, Münster in Westfalen, Germany.
Several objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Museum für Naturkunde und Völkerkunde "Julius Riemer", Wittenberg, Germany.
Several objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Néprajzi Múzeum, Budapest, Hungary.
At least 61 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Comte Rodolphe Festetics de Tolna. Field collection 1895-1896.
- Giovanni Bettanin. Acquired 1897-1898.
- Lajos (Ludwig) Biró. Acquired 1900.

Museo di Antropologia e Etnologia, Firenze, Italy.
At least three objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- A. Scheidel. Acquired 1898.
- E. H. Giglioli. Acquired at the end of the 19th century.

Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "L. Pigorini", Roma, Italy.
At least 30 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- E. H. Giglioli. Acquired 1886.
- Otto Finsch. Acquired 1887.

National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan.
More than 62 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1875-1880. Acquired 1986.

Museo Nacional de Antropologia, Mexico City, Mexico.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Captain H. Voogt. Field collection 1908-1909.

Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
At least 10 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Artis. Acquired 1911.
- Paul Wirz. Acquired 1957.

Volkenkundig Museum, Rijksuniversiteit, Groningen, Netherlands.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Theodoor Pieter van Baaren.

Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden, Netherlands.
More than 40 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Museum Godeffroy Hamburg. Acquired 1881.
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1898.

Wereldmuseum, Rotterdam, Netherlands.
At least five objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Hugo Schauinsland. Acquired 1906.

Auckland Museum, Auckland, New Zealand.
At least 37 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. George Brown. Acquired 1876-1878.

Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand.
At least seven objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Otago Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Around 350 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. Cox. Field collection 1902. Acquired 1935.

Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand.
Several objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

National Museum of Papua New Guinea, Boroko, Papua New Guinea.
At least 40 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Benson Bambai. Field collection 1973.
- Michael Gunn. Field collection 1982, 1984.
- Brigitte Derlon. Field collection 1984.
- Antje Denner. Field collection 2002.

Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology, St. Petersburg, Russia.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay. Field collection 1871-1885.

Museo del Ejército, Madrid, Spain.
At least two objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Museo del Anthropologia, Madrid, Spain.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection.

Statens Museer för Världskultur, Göteborg, Sweden.
At least one object from New Ireland is known from registration data or was sighted in the collection.

Etnografiska Museet, Stockholm, Sweden.
At least seven objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Count Birger Morner. Field collection 1915.

Museum der Kulturen, Basel, Switzerland.
More than 600 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- F. Wandres. Acquired 1896.
- Felix Speiser. Field collection 1930.
- Alfred Bühler. Field collection 1931.
- Paul Wirz. Field collection 1950.
- Antje Denner. Field collection 2002, 2004.

Musée Barbier-Mueller, Genève, Switzerland.
More than 45 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Richard Parkinson.

Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève, Switzerland.
67 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Fondation Beyeler, Riehen, Switzerland.
More than five objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.

Art Gallery and Museums and the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, UK.
21 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- J. Ashbury. Acquired between 1877 and 1890.
- Dr. Kebbell. Acquired 1905.

University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, UK.

107 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Professor Sidgwick. Acquired 1890.
- E. W. P. Chinnery. Acquired c. 1925-1929.

McLean Museum and Art Gallery, Greenock, UK.
More than ten objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Robert L. Younger (owner of the ship *Gulf of Genoa*) or Captain Swan. Acquired 1894.

Liverpool Museum, Liverpool, UK.
More than nine objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Joseph Mayer. Acquired 1867.
- Wellcome Historical Medical Museum. Acquired 1919.

British Museum, London, UK.
More than 120 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- A. W. Franks (*ex* Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin). Acquired 1879.
- H. H. Romilly. Acquired 1884.
- Wellcome Historical Medical Museum. Acquired 1954.
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1875-1880. Acquired 1986.
- Wilfred Powell. Field collection. Acquired 1882.

Sainsbury Collection, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK.
More than six objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Rev. George Brown. Field collection 1875-1880. Acquired 1986.

Field Museum, Chicago, USA.
More than 260 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- Carl Hagenback. Acquired 1893.
- J. F. G. Umlauff or Museum Umlauff, Hamburg. Acquired 1905.
- Richard Parkinson. Acquired 1908.
- George A. Dorsey Expedition. Acquired 1909.
- A. B. Lewis. Acquired 1909-1913.
- Voogdt et al. Acquired 1913.

Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, Indiana, USA.
Three objects from New Ireland were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Wilhelm Wostrack. Collected 1908.
- A. B. Lewis. Acquired 1909-1913.

Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, USA.
More than 50 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:
- J. A. Cleveland donated two spears in 1821.
- Capt. J. Hammond & W. H. Pease. Acquired 1860.
- Harold Sewall, Consul-General at Samoa from 1887-1892. Acquired in 1925.
- Andover-Newton Theological School. Registered 1946.

Saint Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, USA.
Sixteen objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection.
Original field collectors or sources include:

- Kapitän Nauer. Acquired by Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig 1913.
- Acquired by Pitt Rivers and deposited at Peasant Museum in 1886.
- Augustin Krämer. Collected 1908-1909.
- S.M.S. *Fasana* Expedition, 1893-1895.

American Museum of Natural History, New York, USA.
More than 90 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- Otto Finsch. Acquired 1898.

Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, USA.
More than 30 objects from New Ireland are known from registration data or were sighted in the collection. Original field collectors or sources include:
- S.M.S. *Panther*, before 1900.

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In the southwest Pacific, at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, the people of New Ireland, an island group located east of New Guinea, created more than 20,000 works of art which they used in traditional context, then exported to the outside world. In their ceaseless quest for artistic expression, the people living on this remote archipelago created strikingly original pieces which are astonishing works of art.

In order to gain a greater understanding of the creative processes that occurred more than 120 years ago and resulted in this tremendous outpouring of art objects, the curators and authors traveled to New Ireland to work with local people in their villages. They brought with them photographs of the old art works now in museum collections, and they recorded aesthetic experience and ritual context as they occur today. Their original research in many of the art-producing regions of New Ireland has resulted in new data that has provided in a much clearer understanding of creativity in Island Melanesia than has previously been achieved.

The exhibition and catalogue feature art works from all regions of New Ireland that originated during this period, and explore the sources of this tremendously creative output.

SAINT LOUIS
ART MUSEUM

musée du quai Branly

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